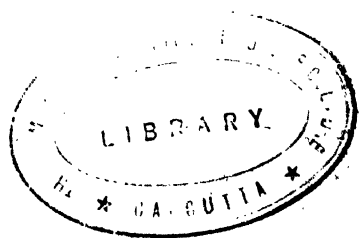


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THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 20,825
CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS
IN INDIA.

1909.



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PREFACE.

IN presenting this Volume to the public we make no pretensions to an accurate knowledge of the doctrines and dogmas of all the religions dealt with herein. We have published the theses, as received from the Convention Committee, without making any alteration or adding any observations on them. The editing was mainly done by the Committee and we had very little to do with material alterations in the language or the ideas. Some typographical mistakes may appear here and there, as the book had to be hurried through the press, for which we crave the indulgence of our readers. Of course the preface and the introductory portions are ours and we take this opportunity of thanking the Committee and its Chairman for having so kindly permitted us to publish these volumes. The introduction to the first volume contains a short account of the religious upheavals in India from the Vedic times and also of the conferences or conventions held from time to time. The Introduction to the second volume will include an account of such upheavals outside India.

Before we conclude, however, we think that the Report of the Convention would not be complete if we omitted to give a brief history of how the idea of the first Convention of Religions in India was worked out and to take the opportunity of thanking those large-hearted gentlemen from whom we received active sympathies and encouragement. We commend the readers here to read the "The Proceedings of the Convention," which will be found in its proper place and which have been edited by the Committee of the Convention.

The idea of this Convention first originated with

the great Swami Vivekananda in whose name our Society stands and had remained dormant in the circle of his admirers till it was taken up by the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta. As the great Swami observed, there has been more blood-shed in the name of religion than anything else. To put a stop to fanaticism and bigotry, to preach the idea of religious toleration and also to be of service to those organised bodies which are working with the same end in view, the members of the Society above-named, in meeting assembled, passed the following resolutions on the 29th November, 1908.

1. "That the most fitting manner of celebrating in a public way the Birth-day anniversary of Swami Vivekananda will be by holding a Parliament of Religions at Calcutta, in which the different sects of all the Religions of India will be represented."

2. That the members be empowered to give effect to the above resolution by forming a committee composed of representatives from different religious sects, to do all that is necessary for making a complete success of the undertaking and to make the movement a public one, to transfer the management of the whole thing to the Convention Committee, as soon as it is formed,

3. That the society will always be prepared to help the Committee in every possible way till the first Convention is over.

Work was commenced in right earnest and in a short time the members enlisted the sympathies of :—

1. The prominent members of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj and also of the Devalay.

2. Mr. A. H. Dharmapala, General Secy, Mahabodhi Society.

3. Mr. Munni Maharaj Sing of the Sikh community.

4. Mr. Matrumal, of the Marwari Association.
5. Mr. Dhannu Lal Agarwallah of the Saiva Association, Setambari Sect.
6. Mahasthabir Purnananda Bhikshu, President, Buddhist Math, Calcutta.
7. Mr. Madon, the author of a paper on Zoroastrianism.
8. Rev. E. A. Cohen.
9. Mr. J. N. Mittra of the Theosophical Society.

And many other men of light and leading. Some of them also promised to join the committee.

The first however, to encourage the members most, were Messrs. Gaganendra Nath Tagore and Abanindra Nath Tagore, members of the well known Tagore family of Calcutta and also Mr. Tarakdas Dhar of Bowbazar. The society begs leave to acknowledge its heartfelt thanks to them. Mr. Saroda Charan Mitter was approached at this stage, after his retirement from the High Court Bench, Calcutta, and he took a keen interest in the movement and has since been leading it as the Chairman of the Committee. He has left the Society and all students of comparative theology highly indebted to him. We avail ourselves of this opportunity of thanking Mr. Mitter and the members of the Committee for the hard and unselfish work that they did and the interest they took to make this idea of the Society the success that it has attained. We fervently hope that the Committee will, under the able leadership of its Chairman, enlarge its scope and bring into existence a Parliament of religions, which will not be confined to India alone but will move round the globe from one end to the other. About a fortnight before the actual sitting of the Convention, a well known Samiti of Calcutta which has since ceased to exist, volunteered

to work for the Convention under the guidance of its Chairman and the two Secretaries (who were also the Secretaries of the Vivekananda Society). So perfect was their organisation and so willing were they to serve that they were the wonder and the admiration of all. The Society cannot be too grateful to them for their unselfish work.

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INTRODUCTION.

A WAY in the dim ages of hoary antiquity, when man was in the primitive stage of human civilization in all other parts of the world, a mighty voice rose in India, to proclaim the eternal truth, which has, since then, been the keynote of the Indian religious life—“*Ekam Sat, Vipra Vahudha Vadanti*”—That which exists is One ; the Sages call It variously. It has brought solace, not to India alone, but to whole humanity. As it gained in volume and strength in time, in it we read the pulsation of the Indian national life that has expressed itself in later times in those wonderful ideals of love and religious toleration and has formed the very beginning of the subsequent conventions of religions in India.

Centuries after centuries rolled on before we come to the period of the *Upanishads* and we find conferences of different faiths held under the guidance of inspired Sages and kings, in different parts of India, especially in the courts of the *Janakas*. The result was that the ancient India of the *Upanishads* became the living land of religious conventions, whence we get glimpses of the endeavours of the truly religious hearts to congregate in a communion of brotherly feeling, for reciprocity and assimilation of ideas and better mutual understanding. High as the Highest Himself, glorious as Glory itself and strong as Strength herself are the bold speculations of the *Upanishads*. Suffice it to say here, that all the subsequent religious faiths of Indian origin have drawn their inspiration from these and these alone. Herein lies the whole idea of toleration, the recognition of the unity in the seemingly hopeless mesh of variety—“*Ekam Sat, Vipra Vahudha Vadanti*.”

Centuries again rolled on and we find in the *Pauranic* period, the *theory of Ishtam*—the selection of one's own ideal of the Deity—thrown as a challenge to humanity, with such vigour that it forms, even at the present day, the very back-bone of Indian national existence. That ideal causes a differentiation between one person and another. Amidst such conflicting ideals, however, there must be a recognition of the underlying principle—*Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*. It is the failure to recognise this principle that has always set back the course of human progress. And in course of time, it really so happened, that the ideals of love and toleration were, for a time, replaced by morbid religious hatred and intense jealousy. India was at a loss to decide which to accept and which to reject. Sri Krishna, the mighty Hero of India and the greatest Preacher of harmony, appeared at this critical period of the world's religious evolution. Amidst the din of battle and the sound of trumpets, He raised His voice above all these and boldly declared, "*Ya Yatha Mang Prapadyanta &c,*" "Whosoever comes to me, through whatsoever form, I reach him. O Partha ! all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me." He preached that great principle of the Vedas in a new light and with great vigour. India became again harmonised. This noble principle of truth and toleration has permeated, as the great Swami Vivekananda observed, "the whole of our national existence, till it is mingled in our blood and has become one with us in every grain."

Then comes in the Buddhistic period. In the words of the great Swami, "And from the topmost crest of the wave that deluged India for nearly a thousand years, we see another glorious figure, and that was our Gautama Sakyamuni. We worship Him as God incarnate, the greatest, the boldest preacher of morality that the world ever saw, the greatest karma-yogin ; as a disciple of Himself, as it were, the same Sri Krishna came to show how to make his theories

practical." With the multiplicity of religious faiths, increased the utility of religious conferences and when, after the life-long preaching of that mighty soul, the Lord Buddha of the Hindus and the Buddhists, his noble teachings had reached the farthest corners of India, we come upon the earliest existence of such a holy gathering held at Rajgir (Behar) in B. C. 543, under the auspices of the king Ajatasatru. We next come upon the Vaisali conference (in Muzafferpore) of 443 B. C. Again in 255 B. C. was held the famous conference at Pataliputra (Patna) under the guidance of the great Buddhist king Asoka. Kanishka is reported to have held the next conference in 78 A. D. in Jalandhar (Punjab). "As late as the 7th century A. D., king Harshabardhana of Kanyakubja used to hold religious conferences at intervals of every five years. Similarly, the Jains used to convene religious conferences of which the most notable one was held at Mathura, in the 2nd century A. D."*

In this Buddhistic period, India came in contact—though not for the first time—with diverse nationalities of the world. The noble teachings of Buddha were thrown broad-cast all over the world and converts to the new faith were made by hundreds and by thousands. Every action is, however, followed by a reaction and this is one of the immutable laws of nature. No wonder, that the active proselytism in the Buddhistic faith should be suddenly arrested, a few centuries after the passing away of the Founder, by several conflicting causes operating together. Some great mistakes were, however, committed at this period for which India is paying dearly even to-day. Buddha was himself essentially an Indian in his thought and action. Brisk as was the propagation of the faith, little care seems to have been taken to

* Vide the President's speech, which will be found in the Report of the proceedings.

combat the outlandish ideals of foreigners, which therefore unconsciously coloured the preaching of later Buddhism. Amidst such a complicated state of affairs, selection in making converts ought to have been the first great thing needed. Moreover, a gradual adaptation and assimilation of the best and the essential in an old faith, to suit the new light of the new faiths—an imperceptible absorption in the society of a progressive soul and not a rude revolution of his cherished ideals, by means of a sudden conversion, —has always been the golden rule with an Indian prophet of Truth. The latter-day Buddhists appear to have neglected this fundamental principle in their later preaching and the result was a hopeless ruin of the whole structure of Buddhism. For the time being, all harmony was gone and the great principle of the Vedas was forgotten.

In this dark period of Indian history, about the 9th century A. D., there arose that young and gifted Brahmin of Malabar, the great Sankaracharyya. He held religious conferences and fought against the influence of the degraded Buddhism. He showed that the essence of Buddhism and that of the Vedanta were not very different. He was the reconciler of the Indian thoughts to the great principle—*Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*.

There is a misconception in certain quarters that Buddhism is not a part of Hinduism, but a religion different from the parent-faith. This, however, is not borne out by facts. Buddhism has ever been recognised in the land of its birth, as an inseparable part of Hinduism. Gautama Buddha is one of the ten *Avatars* of the Hindus. The council of Siladitya, Magasthenes' account of India, Hiouen Thsang's account, and even the great council of Asoka, all go to prove that Buddhism was as much a part and parcel of Hinduism, as Vaishnavism or Shaktism

now is.* To quote Dr. Hunter † “Buddhism was thus formed into a State Religion by the Councils of Asoka and Kanishka. It did not abolish caste. On the contrary, reverence to the Brahmans and to the spiritual guide ranked as one of the three great duties, with obedience to parents and acts of kindness to all men and animals.” The council of Siladitya recognised the image-worship of the Hindus. We quote the same authority again. “On the first day of the council, a statue of Buddha was installed with great pomp ; on the second, an image of the Brahman Sun-God ; on the third, an idol of Hindu Siva.”

The doctrines of Buddha were not foreign to India. It is a great mistake to suppose that Buddhism was driven out of the land of its birth by the sword. There might have been local persecutions here and there of degraded Buddhism, but the truth is that it was finally absorbed and assimilated in the immense body of the parent-faith. The influence of Buddhism may still be seen in the practices and observances of the several Vaishnava and other Hindu religious sects in India.

The worst forms of latter-day Buddhism indeed sapped the very life-blood of the Indian nation. The old Hindu ideals, based upon thousands of years' experience were thrown away. Up arose in this period of Indian history, the great Kumarilla, a Brahman of Behar, in the 8th century A. D. He was followed by the great Sankara in the 9th century A. D. As the President, of the first Convention of Religions in India in the Town Hall, Calcutta, observed, Kumarilla and Sankaracharyya were the first preachers who recognised the utility of religious conferences in proper forms.

* We are glad to note here that the first notice, which will be found in the Report of the Proceedings of the Convention of Religions in India and which was issued by the Committee of the Convention, to news papers &c., places Buddhism as one of the many sects of Hinduism.

† Dr. Hunter's Brief History of the Indian people, 12th edition.

Mighty was the task of Sankara. He had to fight hard against the revolting ideas of the Turanians and other non-Indian races, who had then settled down in India. Further, to save his New India from the barbaric on-sloughs of aggressive foreign ideals, he prohibited social intercourse with foreigners and to avoid the introduction of such pernicious ideas by social contact with the outside world, he fixed the limit of Hindustan *i. e.* the limit beyond which a Hindu must not go.

Reformer after reformer followed Sankara, too numerous to mention here. Prominent amongst them was the brilliant Ramanuja who rose about the middle of the 12th century A. D. He may be said to be the first of the line of Vaishnavite reformers. After the great Buddha, he was the first, perhaps, to open the door of religion even to the down-trodden pariahs. Within a century, two other great reformers arose. Ramananda, who preached his doctrines in northern India and his far-famed disciple, Kabir, who carried the doctrines of his master throughout Bengal. With their great hearts they embraced all and rejected none. One of the sayings of Kabir runs thus "Embrace all ; hate not any name of the Lord ; say yea, yea to all, but for yourself, hold on to your own ideal." And again "Search within thine own heart, *there* is the Lord both of the Musalmans and of the Hindus. Behold but One in all objects....."

Within a century, we again find another very great religious upheaval in Bengal started by Srikrishna Chaitanya of Nadiā. His Bhakti (love of God) knew no bounds. His great personality moulded the thought and even the language of Bengal. Conferences of diverse faiths were held here and there to fight against the doctrines of Chaitanya. But he conquered them all by his intense love and the power of his great personality.

About this time another reformer of fame, Nanak, better known as Guru Nanak, rose in the Panjab. Like that of Kabir, his faith was all-inclusive. He is the founder of the great Sikh religion.

About the year 1520, Vallabha-Swami rose, to preach in Northern India, that Mukti or salvation can be attained even amidst the enjoyments of life, only if the heart is kept pure.

Within half a century again, we see another reformer, the well-known Dadu of Ahmedabad, preaching his doctrines at Narain, in the district of Joypur. About this time, we see Akbar holding religious conferences. It is evident, that the great religious teachers after Sankara down to the latter-day reformers, convened religious conferences of the existing faiths in India, and by a healthy discussion presented each one in its best light. And this idea was taken up with almost a preacher's zeal by the Emperor Akbar, under whose auspices, Pundits, Maulvis, Sadhus and Fakirs, missionaries and other religious persons were united on a common platform for religious discussion. We take the liberty here of quoting again a few lines from the Presidential Address. "In more recent times religious conferences, better known as Parliaments of Religions, have been held in Chicago and Venice, and occasionally similar conferences are held in different parts of modern Europe. Even in modern India, our religious gatherings, periodically held in almost all parts of the Empire, call forth vast congregations, of which the greatest are the Kumbha Melas." We may add here that even socio-religious movements here and there for social reformations, after Western methods, were not wanting in India during the the British rule. It is the glory of India, that such movements even had to be carried on through religion.

Thus there has been a series of religious upheavals from the Vedic times down to the present day, bringing into existence, doctrines and faiths of diverse

character. But each and every one of them (excepting perhaps some of the socio-religious movements of modern times) is Hindu ; for each and everyone of them recognises the great principle of the Vedas above referred to. Thus we may call the Hindu Indian faith, the Vedanta religion or the Vedic faith. The word Hindu is of doubtful origin and does not express the whole of the all-embracing and the all-inclusive idea.

It is an irony of fate that though India has been producing spiritual giants from times immemorial and wave after wave of spiritual thought has deluged the land from time to time, hatred and jealousy, sectarianism and bigotry have come together even at the present day, to undermine the very vitality of the ancient faith of the Rishis.

But the causes are not far to seek. With each great religious upheaval, India came in contact with the people of the other parts of the world, who were then in a very low state of civilization. With alliances with foreigners in the Buddhistic period, of which there are ample historical evidences and which were stopped by Sankara, India imbibed the outlandish and barbarous ideas of religion. It is not that the Hindu race could not otherwise become degenerate, but it is certain that the degeneration of the race has been largely due to the impress of those foreign and outlandish ideals. Those ideas had to be refined and re-Hinduised. This has been done by every great reformer and the process is still going on. We have not the space here to deal with the subject in detail, as it is controversial. But the fact of the foreign impress is there and we beg leave to invite antiquarian scholars, here and abroad, to unveil the mystery that lies over this problem of Indian history. The question is important for it is our firm conviction that unless and until the past history of India is definitely traced, the true history of the

other nations will ever remain in darkness; for India, being the repository of all sorts of ideas, the people have retained them intact, whereas all other old nations and their ideas are almost extinct. It is only with the help of Indian history that we can trace the psychological and the mythological history of the different races now extinct.

We take the liberty here to mention as a passing remark, that instead of looking down upon the Hindu Puranas, and rejecting the entire literature as fabulous myths and hence useless, we may greatly profit by them if we study them even from a historical point of view only. This Pauranic period may be said to have commenced from the Ramayan period, though the stories might have been compiled thousands of years after.

Whatever may be the value of the Puranas, they clearly show how the degradation of the Hindu race has been brought about by the ideas engrafted upon them from foreign sources, and they point clearly to the results of indiscriminate intermarriage of Hindus with foreigners. This is the legacy the Hindu Indians have received by allowing foreign blood and outlandish ideas to run into their veins, without taking any step to counteract those morbid influences. The darkest period of Indian society may be said to have begun from the chaos that followed the end of Mahomedan rule and this state of things has continued ever since. We have not the inclination here to paint the hideousness of the then Indian Society, but one thing was certain—that if Hindu Society were allowed to go on like that for a few centuries more, its fate would have been, perhaps, complete annihilation or total extinction. At this crisis one thing was greatly needed—the regeneration of the entire Hindu race. With this end in view, reformer after reformer arose in different parts of India during British rule and worked after the ideals of western societies. All of

them had great hearts and all of them had one end in view—the saving of Indian Society from its stupendous fall and uplifting it to a glorious position. Glory be to their noble attempts. But the reforms they attempted to introduce were the result of western education, and were prompted by a desire to imitate the ideals of the West without the culture of Hindu Scriptures and ideals. They had three main things in view, (1) Female liberty (2) Remarriage of Hindu widows (3) The abolition of the caste-system prevalent amongst Hindu Indians. The first two did not affect the masses ; for they have them from a very remote time.

The Hindus have never believed in reformation in the sense in which the term is understood in the West. As Vedantins, they believe in evolution—assimilation and adaptation of new ideas—and not in mere imitations. Hence it is that the efforts of these reformers for nearly a century have not produced the desired effect on the Hindus. Nevertheless, be it said for truth's sake, that the wave of reformation started by them put a great hinderance to the strong current of drunkenness and lust and also to the conversion of the people to other faiths, which tended to become a fashion of the day, amongst the educated classes. But this was not sufficient ; for the majority of the people—the masses, with their traditional ideals degraded—remained unmoved. The vanity of western education reigned rampant amongst a section of the educated classes. The masses began to be looked down upon as uneducated fools. Without book-learning, they thought, there was no hope for anyone. Irreverance to the traditional ideals and book-learning seemed to be the *sumum-bonum* of the lives of those educated men. These facts can definitely be gathered from the literature of the day. Bigotry, in a somewhat polished form was the result. While such was the state of affairs in India, the West was groaning under the

heavy pressure of agnostic and atheistic ideas. Mill, Huxley and the schools of philosophers that followed in their train, in Europe on the one hand, and on the other the latest researches and discoveries in different branches of science were dealing heavy blows on fanaticism, superstition and bigotry which had been taught as the essence of religious faiths here and elsewhere. Religion and religious ideals were considered by many as useless and as veritable burdens to the human brain. It was not Indian society alone that was in a chaos but the degradation was general and affected almost all parts of the East. Slowly and imperceptibly, but steadily, had the degeneration of China commenced. The doors of the other parts of Asia were shut up against all outsiders. The people refused to take the novel experiences of the outside world and profit by them and thus found themselves unfit to cope with the new ideas imported by foreigners. Materialism and materialistic ideas thus threatened to become the future ideals of the world.

In the midst of such a conflict of spiritual ideals all the world over, we find in India, near the capital of the British Empire in the East, within the very heart of materialism and unbelief, western vice and western luxury, on the bank of the Ganges, a poor young Brahmin, with scarcely any book-learning whatever, undergoing fearful penances for twelve long years in search after Truth, under the now famous Panchabati tree of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar, a few miles north of Calcutta. He is known as Ramkrishna Paramhansa, better known in some quarters as the Prophet of Dakshineswar. His biographers say that he realized the Divinity of Jesus within himself and also the spirit of the Prophet of Arabia and in fact he got the vision beatific of almost all the religions of the world. In the latter part of his life we find spiritual men of diverse faiths, highly cultured men and

men of wealth and position sitting at his feet, with all reverence, to quench their thirst for Truth and to learn the rudimentary lessons of religion. At this period of his life, we find young Narendranath, afterwards Swami Vivekananda, mixing with men of diverse creeds for the purpose of *realizing* the Spirit Divine. Not doctrines or dogmas, theories or speculations, but realization, '*being* and *becoming*' and nothing short of realization would satisfy him. Young Narendra went over to the Paramhansa and received positive replies to his questions. His soul became satisfied and full. He became his ardent follower.

Ramkrishna Paramhansa renounced his desire for wealth and fame and indeed his all for the sake of the Lord. He showed that education does not consist in book-learning, but in an attempt to realize the truths contained in them ; that education can never be said to be complete, so long as those truths have not been realized ; that real life and real power are not in wealth and position, but in intense *Vairagya*m* (non-attachment) ; that religion is not in tall talks, but in practice, in realization, in '*being* and *becoming*.' The life and teachings of this man show that he was the very embodiment of the great principle of the Vedas—*Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*—That which exists is One, the sages call It variously—and that holding fast to one's own ideal, one should not only sympathise with the faiths of others, but should learn to become positively helpful to one another. His prayers to God as "Mother ! destroy in me all idea that I am of a superior caste and that my brother is low and a pariah ; for dost Thou not exist in ever so many forms ?" And his sayings as "The Lord has become these varieties.

* *Vairagya*m is non-attachment or resignation. *Tyag* is renunciation or giving up of all. The latter is in many cases the effect of the former. *Vairagya*m is mental. *Tyag* is rather material. One may have *Tyag*, but may not have *Vairagya*m and vice versa. The word renunciation is used sometimes to mean *Tyag* and sometimes *Vairagya*m and sometimes both.

He has become this universe" show that his is not only the doctrine of universal toleration but also that of spiritual oneness, or in other words, the solidarity of the human race, nay even of the whole universe.

As observed by the great Swami Vivekananda, "The world is waiting for this grand idea of universal toleration. It will be a great acquisition to civilization. Nay, no civilization can go on growing before fanaticism stops and bloodshed stops and brutality stops. No civilization can begin to lift up its head until we look charitably upon each other, and the first step towards that much-needed charity is to look charitably and kindly upon the religious convictions of each other. Nay more, to understand that, not only should we be charitable towards each other, but positively helpful to each other however different our religious ideas and convictions may be." And again "The second great idea which the world is waiting to receive from our Upanishads is the solidarity of this universe Thus we find solidarity coming inspite of itself. Even in politics and sociology, problems that were only national twenty years ago, can no more be solved on national grounds. They are assuming huge proportions, gigantic shapes. They can only be solved when looked at in the broader light of international grounds. International organizations, international combinations, international laws are the cry of the day. That shows the solidarity. In science, every day they are finding out that view of the matter. You speak of matter, the whole universe as one mass, one ocean of matter, in which you and I, the Sun and the Moon and everything else, are but the names of different little whirlpools and nothing more. Mentally speaking it is one universal ocean of thought, in which you and I are similar little whirlpools, and as spirit, It moveth not, It changeth not ; It is the One Unchangeable, Unbroken, Homogenous *Atman*." It is with the object of helping to bring about the

realization of the two grand ideals, that the Society came forward with the idea of holding such a convention.

There were religious and socio-religious movements in India in the last century, under the leadership of Raja Rammohan Roy, Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, Keshub Chandra Sen, the Venerable Shaligram Sing, Mr. Ranade, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the Venerable Agnihotri and many others and the movements started by them have produced, the different sections of the Brahmo Samaj movement, the Radhaswami sect, the Arya Somaj movement and the Deva Somaj movement. During the nineteenth century, the West witnessed great upheavals in social and political matters. Gigantic organisations, which are yet the marvels of the world, took place in the West. But a world-wide movement like the holding of a Parliament of Religions, at least from time to time, under the guidance of an organised body or of organised bodies co-operating with one another, has become absolutely necessary at the present moment, to create a real spirit of universal brotherhood and religious toleration. The world needs it, the times require it. The genius of the Americans conceived the idea of holding such a Parliament. This great and grand move of the Americans towards furthering the cause of humanity did not indeed become permanent but God bless their noble attempt all the same, to take the initiative in the cause.

THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY.

Report of the Proceedings of the Convention of Religions in India.

Events which mark the pages of history have not unoften begun from simple and unobtrusive efforts of an insignificant few. Five months ago the possibility of the diverse religious sects in India meeting together on a common friendly platform to enunciate their respective doctrines was discussed amongst a few young Bengalis in Calcutta. They were emboldened by the encouragement they received from some of the leading men of the different religious sects in Calcutta. The Secretary of the Vivekananda Society to which these young men belonged sought for the advice and aid of Mr. Sarada Charan Mitra who had a few days before retired from his office as a puisne judge of the Calcutta High Court. He took up the idea in right earnest, gave every encouragement and agreed to take the lead. A Committee was soon formed consisting of some of the leading followers residing in or about Calcutta of the different great religions in India. A notice was caused to be published in the leading newspapers by the Committee calling upon the different religious communities in India to elect delegates to represent them at a Convention of Religions in India which it was then proposed would be held in Calcutta by the end of January, 1909.

The notice was in the following words :--

A CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS IN INDIA.

It has been proposed that there should be a Convention for the elucidation of the doctrines of the different religions followed by the different sections of the Indian Community. To give effect to the above proposal, a committee consisting of the following gentlemen have been formed :--

1. Sj. Sarada Charan Mitra, (late Puisne Judge, High Court), Chairman.
2. Raja Peary Mohan Mukerjee, C.S.I.
3. Satyendra Nath Tagore, C.S.
4. R. D. Mehta, Esq, C.I.E.
5. Rai Narendra Nath Sen Bahadur.
6. Babu Maharaj Bahadur Sing.
7. Rai Rajendra Chandra Sastri Bahadur, M.A.
8. Mahamahopadhyaya Satis Chandra Bidyabhusin, M.A., PH. D.
9. Moulvi Siraj-ul-Islam Khan Bahadur.
10. „ Mirza Abul-Fazl.

11. Sj. Gaganendra Nath Tagore.
12. Sj. Abanindra Nath Tagore.
13. Rev. B. C. Sarkar.
14. Mahasthabir Ganalankar.
15. Purnananda Bhikshu.
16. Sj. Dhannoo Lal Agarwalla.
17. Swami Suddhananda.
18. Sj. Charoo Chandra Bose.
19. Dr. J. N. Kanjilal, M.B.
20. Sj. Bhupendra Kumar Bose, M.A., B.L.
21. Sj. Kumud Bandhu Sen.

} SECRETARIES.

Thesis on the following amongst other religions and the different sects thereof will be read at the Convention :—

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Hinduism. | 2. Christianity. |
| (a) Buddhism. | 3. Islamism. |
| (b) Jainism. | 4. Zoroastrianism. |
| (c) Shaktatism. | 5. Judaism. |
| (d) Vaishnavism. | |
| (e) Saivism. | |
| (f) Sikhism. | |
| (g) Brahmoism | |
| (h) Arya Samaj. | |
| (i) Theosophy. | |

The Committee think it desirable that each religious community should elect its own representative to elucidate its doctrines at the Convention.

Gentlemen desiring to read theses are respectfully requested to communicate with the Secretaries at 85, Grey Street, Calcutta, but no thesis will be received after the 31st instant.

Every thesis should contain an elucidation of the principles of the religion or religious sect dealt with by it and state its peculiar features, distinguishing it from other religions and other religious sects, but it should not contain any attack, direct or indirect, on any sect or religion. No paper should take more than half an hour to read.

Every effort will be made to hold the Convention by the end of last week of January. The precise date will be announced on or about the 31st instant.

President,
BHUPENDRA KUMAR BOSE,
KUMUD BANDHU SEN,

Secretaries.

The notice, as appears, at once attracted public attention, and it reached the remotest corners of India, and such was the enthusiastic response that the Committee considered it best to postpone the Convention for two or three months so that the various communities might get themselves adequately represented and their respective doctrines properly elucidated. The time originally announced was quite inadequate for the purposes of the first Convention of Religions in India in the twentieth century.

From the first week of the announcement in the newspapers, letters of sympathy and congratulation began to pour in from all quarters and all religious Communities. The original Committee had to be enlarged to suit the large amount of additional work imposed on it. Ultimately the following gentlemen formed the Committee and the following notice was sent to the newspapers for publication :—

THE COMMITTEE.

As has already been announced the Convention of Religions in India under the Presidency of the Maharaja Bahadur of Darbhanga for the purpose of the elucidation of the doctrines of the different religions followed by the different sections of the Indian community will be held on April 9th, 10th and 11th in the Town Hall of Calcutta, which has been kindly placed at the disposal of the Convention. Theses on all the great religions and different sections thereof will be read at the Convention by their respective representatives.

The following is the full list of the members of the Committee :—Mr. Sarada Charan Mitra, (late Puisne Judge, High Court, Chairman ; Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandi of Casimbazar ; Raja Peary Mohon Mukerjee, C.S.I., Mr. R. D. Mehta, C.I.E. ; Babu Maharaj Bahadur Singh ; Mr. Satyendra Nath Tagore, C. S. ; Babu Rudmall Goenka ; Rev. E. M. D. Cohen ; Babu Natha Singh ; Moulvi Siraj-ul-Islam Khan Bahadur ; Moulvi Mirza Abul-Fazl, Rev. B. C. Sarkar ; Rai Narendra Nath Sen Bahadur · Rai Rajendra Chandra Sastri Bahadur M.A. ; Babu Gaganendra Nath Tagore ; Mahamahopadhyaya Satis Chandra Bidyabhusan, M.A., Ph. D., Babu Abanindra Nath Tagore ; Babu Charu Chandra Bose ; Dr. J. N. Kanjilall, M.B. ; Mahasthabir Ganalankar, Purnanda Bhikshu ; Babu Dhannoo Lal Agarwalla, and Swami Suddhananda. With Messrs. Bhupendra Kumar Bose, M.A., B.L. ; and Kumud Bandhu Sen as Secretaries.

The great aim which the Convention has in view is to create and foster feelings of brotherhood and active sympathy amongst the several religious communities in India by clearing points of difference and

removing prejudices which arise out of ignorance and want of proper knowledge of the doctrines of the different religions. This is the first Convention of its kind in this country, the necessity of which has long been felt by those who have the good of the country at heart and the success of which entirely depends upon the active sympathy and hearty co-operation of the followers of the different faiths in India, to all of whom the Committee extend their cordial welcome.

All the important religious Societies in the different parts of India are requested to send their delegates to the Convention to shew their sympathy with its object and to further the cause of peace and good will. The Committee will be glad to arrange for the accommodation of the delegates. The selected delegates should forthwith communicate through their societies to the Secretaries the date and hour of their arrival in Calcutta.

A large number of letters reached the Committee in a very short time and the following rules were framed as to the theses intended to be read at the Convention.

- (1) No theses should take more than 30 minutes to read it through.
- (2) The theses must reach the office of the Convention at least three weeks before the date fixed for holding the Convention.
- (3) There should be no attack on any religion or sects thereof.
- (4) Every thesis should be examined by one or more of the members and approved of by them before it can be accepted by the Committee and allowed to be read.
- (5) A thesis may be approved in part, in which case, only the approved part would be read before the Convention.
- (6) All approved theses would be published in the Proceeding Book of the Convention, although all of them might not be read owing to want of time or for any other reasons
- (7) In case the writer of a thesis is unable to attend in person, his representative may read it or he may ask one of the Secretaries either to read it himself or to select some one to read his thesis for him.
- (8) No speech should be delivered unless it was the purport of a thesis approved of by the Committee.
- (9) The reading of the introductory portion of every thesis should be omitted to save time.

During the months and days that intervened between the first formation of the Committee and the Convention, the Committee had many sittings and a Subcommittee had to be formed to carry on urgent work. The Chairman of the Committee, the Secretaries of the Subcommittee and the other members of the Sub-committee were intermittant

in their labours. A few weeks before the actual sitting of the Convention the following appeal was again made to the public.

THE CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS IN INDIA.

AN APPEAL.

A Convention of Religions in India under the presidency of the Maharaja of Durbhanga for the purpose of elucidation of the doctrines of the different religions followed by the different sections of the Indian community will be held on the 9th, 10th and 11th April, this year, in Calcutta.

Theses on the following amongst other religions and the different sections thereof will be read at the Convention :—

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| I. Hinduism | II. Christianity. |
| (a) Buddhism | III. Islamism. |
| (b) Jainism | IV. Zoroastrianism |
| (c) Shaktism | V. Judaism |
| (d) Vaishnavism | |
| (e) Saivism | |
| (f) Sikhism | |
| (g) Brahmoism | |
| (h) Arya Samaj | |
| (i) Theosophy | |

We need hardly mention that this is the first Convention of its kind in this country the necessity of which has long been felt by those who have the good of the country at heart.

It is hoped that this Convention will serve to clear many points of difference that exist amongst the different religious sections of the community and that it will bring about reconciliation by removing prejudices which arise out of ignorance and want of proper knowledge of the doctrines of the different religions.

The success of the Convention entirely depends on the active sympathy and heartily co-operation of the generous public.

It is also earnestly hoped that the public will contribute to meet the expenses of the Convention. Any amount will be thankfully received by the Secretaries at 85 Grey Street, Calcutta.

Babu Satis Chandra Bose, 49 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta, is also authorized to receive money and grant receipts.

Sj. Sarada Charan Mitra, (late Puisne Judge,
High Court.)

CHAIRMAN.

Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nundy of Casimbazar.

Raja Peary Mohan Mukerjee, C. S. I.

R. D. Mehta, Esq., C. I. E..

Babu Maharaj Bahadur Sing.

Sj. Satyendra Nath Tagore, C. S.

Sj. Rudmall Goenka.

Revd. E. M. D. Cohen.

Babu Natha Sing.

Moulvi Siraj-ul-Islam Khan Bahadur.

„ Mirza Abul-Fazl.

Rev. B. C. Sarkar.

Rai Narendra Nath Sen Bahadur.

Rai Rajendra Chandra Shastri Bahadur, M. A.

Sj. Gaganendra Nath Tagore.

Mahamahopadhyaya Satis Chandra Bidyabhusan, M. A. Ph. D.

Sj. Abanindra Nath Tagore.

Sj. Charoo Chandra Basu.

Dr. J. N. Kanjilall, M. B.

Mahasthabir Ganalankar.

Purnananda Bhikshu.

Sj. Dhannoo Lal Agarwalla.

Swami Suddhananda.

Sj. Bhupendra Kumar Bose, M. A., B. L.

Sj. Kumud Bandhu Sen.

} SECRETARIES.

THE Committee of the Convention of Religions in India request all the important religious societies or bodies in different parts of India to send their Delegates to the Convention which will be held in the Town Hall at Calcutta on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 9th, 10th, and 11th April, 1909, during the Easter holidays under the presidency of Hon'ble Maharaja Rameswar Sing Bahadur of Durbhanga.

THE Committee beg to draw the attention of all the religious bodies in India to the great aim which the Convention has in view, *viz.* to create and foster feelings of brotherhood and active sympathy amongst the several religious communities in India, by clearing points of difference and removing prejudices which arise out of ignorance and want of proper knowledge of the doctrines of the different religions. This is the first Convention of its kind in this country, the necessity for which has long been felt by those who have the good of the country at heart. The success of the Convention entirely depends upon the active sympathy

and hearty co-operation of the followers of the different faiths in India, to all of whom the Committee extend their cordial welcome.

AS has been already announced, the Committee will be glad to arrange for the accommodation of all the delegates from outside Calcutta. Selected delegates will please communicate through their Societies, to the Secretaries of the Convention, the date and hour of their arrival in Calcutta. Gentlemen with badges will wait at the Railway Stations.

THE proceedings of the Convention will commence at 12 A.M. on each of the above days (with a recess of half an hour after 2 P.M.) and will close at 5 P.M.

ADMISSION to the Convention will be by Tickets (free).

TICKETS may be had at the following places :—

1. The Convention Office—85 Grey Street.
2. 37 Shikdar Bagan Street, Shampukur.
3. 76 Shambazar Street.
4. 199 Cornwallis Street.
5. V. M. C. A. 86 College Street.
6. 59 Puddo Pukur Road, Bhowanipur.
7. 24 Mott's Lane.

Office :—85 Grey Street.)

The 2nd April 1909.)

BHUPENDRA KUMAR BOSE
KUMUD BANDHU SEN

Hon'y. Secretaries.

Delegates of the several of the religious communities began to come into Calcutta from the 7th April 1909 and the Committee obtained the services of 200 workers from the Anusilan Samiti in Calcutta to help them. The workers wore the badge of the Convention, a map of India, in the middle of which the words **धर्मसङ्घ** are written. They made themselves useful by receiving the delegates as they arrived at the railway stations, conducting them to their places of residence, looking after their comfort, finding seats for the delegates and they received other gentlemen. The audience was large and the workers helped them in every way.

A large building and an establishment belonging to the Chairman of the Committee was placed at the disposal of the delegates who came from other Provinces for residence during their stay in Calcutta. Most of the delegates made their own arrangements, but a few availed themselves of the kind offer of the Chairman and he paid for their board.

The proprietors of the Star Theatre at Calcutta kindly offered the services of their concert for three days that the convention held its sittings.

The Corporation of Calcutta passed a resolution at one of their meetings to lend the use of the Town Hall to the Convention Committee for three days free of charge. The hall was tastefully decorated. The columns of the hall were draped with yellow cloth, relieved here and there with light blue, flags chequered and sometimes striped with black, white, yellow and red were sandwiched on the columns. The corner of the dias was separated from the rest by a partition and was reserved for ladies. Arrangements for electric fans were also made by the Committee.

Following is the list of the delegates or their representatives who attended the Convention, with the religions they represented and the Provinces they came from.

THE CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS IN INDIA, 1909.

TOWN HALL—CALCUTTA.

First day--Friday, the 9th April 1909.

Proceedings will begin at 12 A. M.—

1. The President who will be escorted by the workers in badges, will be received at the Entrance of the Hall by the Committee and the Delegates.

2. Music, on the President and the members of the Committee taking their seats on the Dias

3. The Chairman of the Committee will propose the Maharaja Bahadur of Durbhanga to be the President of the Convention. The resolution will be seconded by Roy Narendra Nath Sen Bahadur and will be duly supported.

4. Indian Song.

5. Address by the President.

6. The President will then request that the following theses on religions may be read.

1. Judaism	I. A. Isaac,	Calcutta.
2. "	M. E. D. Cohen	"
3. "	N. E. David,	"
4. Zoroastrianism	Jevanji Jamsetji Modi,	Kolaba.
5. "	Gatha Society,	Bombay.
6. Buddhism	Dowsan Dup of Gontak,	Darjeeling.
7. "	Anagarika H. Dharmapal,	Calcutta.

8. Buddhism Bhikshu Purnananda, Calcutta.
9. Jainism (Digambari) Seetal Prasad of Bombay.
10. „ (Swetambari) Munni Maharaj of Benares.
11. Brahmoism Professor Benoyendra Nath Sen, M.A.,
Calcutta.
12. „ S. Tagore, Calcutta.

Second day—Saturday, the 10th April 1909.

12 A.M. — 5 P.M.

1. Christianity Rev. Herbert Anderson, Calcutta.
2. „ „ John H. Francis, „
3. „ „ Samuel A. Chisholm „
4. Islamism Moulvie Mirza Abul Fazl, „
5. „ „ Khoda Buksh, „
6. „ „ Mohammed Ali of Quadian,
Punjab.
7. „ „ Khondkar Aminuddin Ahmed,
Calcutta.
8. Sikhism Natha Singh, Burra Sangat, Barabazar,
Calcutta.
9. „ Jodh Sing, Amritsar.
10. Theosophy Jogendra Nath Mitra, Calcutta,
11. Deva Dharma Secretary, Deva Samaj, Lahore.
12. Anubhavadwaita
Vedanta Pandit G. Krishna Sastri of Madras.
13. Manava Dharma Haridas Khandelbal, Jubbulpore.

Recess from 2 p.m. to 2-30 p.m.

Third day—Sunday, the 11th April 1909.

12 A.M.—5 P.M.

1. Beer Saivism H. K. Veerabasa Vaiya of Bangalore.
2. Saiva Siddhanta Nallaswami Pillay, Rajmahendry.
3. Ballavacharya Lallu Bhai Parekh of Ahmedabad.
4. Vishishtadvaita Raja Gopalachary of Madras.
5. „ M. T. Nara Singh Ayengar, Bangalore.
6. Ramanuj
Vaishnavism Srinivash Iyengar, Muslipatam.
7. Vaishnavism G. C. Ghose, Calcutta.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 8. Arya Samaj | Mr. Bal Krishna Sahaya, Ranchi. |
| 9. Soura Upasana | „ Ballai Chand Mullik, Calcutta. |
| 10. Vaisnavism | Swami Premananda Bharati, Calcutta. |
| 11. Shaktatism | Mr. Gnanendra Nath Tantraratna. |
| 12. Sanatan Dharma | Swami Saradananda of Bellur Math. |

Recess from 2 p.m. to 2-30 p.m.

NATIONAL ANTHEM IN HINDI.

Admission to the meetings in the Town Hall were by tickets (free). People desiring to attend had to present themselves at stated places to receive tickets for asking.

That the Convention excited great interest throughout India was apparent from the numbers, nationalities and faiths of the delegates who attended the meetings. This was, however, quite in conformity with the traditions of India ; the wonder would have been if no such wide sympathy had been evinced.

That the meetings were well attended shows also that the general public of Calcutta and the neighbourhood were greatly interested in the movement. Owing to shortness of time or absence of a few of the delegates, some of the theses could not be read in the Convention. These were, however, taken as read. These and some theses, which owing to their late arrival could not be included in the programme, will be published in the Proceedings of the Convention.

FIRST DAY.

As had been previously announced the Proceedings of the Convention commenced punctually at 12 noon on Friday, the 9th April, 1909, the Good Friday of the Christian world. The President elect, the Honourable Maharaja Sir RAMESWAR SING Bahadur, K.C.I.E. of Darbhanga was escorted from his Calcutta residence and to the dias between the double rows of workers with their badges on. As soon as the President elect, the members of the Committee and the delegates took their seats, a melodious note was played by the Star Theatre Concert, Calcutta. Everything was gay and imposing. The Chairman of the Committee, Mr. S. C. Mitra, then welcomed the delegates and proposed the President with the following speech which was distinctly heard from every corner of the vast hall. Rai Norendranath Sen Bahadur, the editor of the Indian Mirror and a member of the Committee, seconded Mr. S. C. Mitra.

The proposition was adopted with cheers and acclamation.

Speech by the Chairman of the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

ONE of the simplest and the most pleasant of the duties of my office as Chairman of the Committee which has been charged with the labour and responsibility of the arrangements prefatory to the Convention of the Religions in India is to propose that Maharaja Sir Rameswar Singh Bahadur of Darbhanga should occupy the Chair and to request him to open the proceedings. The Maharaja is too well-known for his learning, position and piety and requires no introduction. As President of the Bharat Dharma Mandal, he is one of the recognized leaders of the two hundred and seven millions of Hindus in British India. As the representative of a dynasty of chiefs and belonging to the highest of Indian castes, he occupies an unique position, and he is deeply learned in Indian philosophy and religion. His sympathies are wide and he is a sincere worshipper of God and a lover of man. We congratulate ourselves for his consenting to undertake the arduous duties of the President of the Convention.

But before I request the Maharaja to open the proceedings, I would, with your leave, interpose myself for a few short minutes between him and yourselves.

The Idea of a Convention of the Religions in India has undoubtedly its genesis in the World's Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in the year 1893. Swami Vivekananda who was one of the most majestic figures in that Parliament of Religions disseminated the idea amongst Indians in India and Mr. Dharmapala who is gracing this assembly and will presently read a paper on Buddhism was not slow in preaching its necessity. But unfortunately for India, the Swami was not allowed to remain long in the world. He was shortly after taken away from amongst us and the idea lay dormant for years. At last in December last and after my retirement from the Bench, some of the prominent members of the Vivekananda Society revived the idea, and a strong Committee consisting of the representatives of most of the great Religions in India was formed to arrange for a Convention. The time, however, was short and it will be for you, friends, to consider how far as a first attempt, the committee has succeeded in discharging the

heavy duties undertaken by it. Speaking for myself, I can bear full testimony to the zeal, industry and intelligence with which I have been assisted by my colleagues in the Committee.

Asia is the birth place of all the great religions of the civilized world and India is deservedly proud of being the birth place of the religions of the largest number of human beings. The religions now professed in India embrace a very large variety, although if mere *statistics* were the test, India must be held to be Brahminical in religion. Islamism, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism with their *sects* and *subsects* embrace an extensive variety, but with unessential differences in dress and form. The cardinal points in all religions are *worship and love*. Each of the Indian or Hindu Religions—Brahminism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism may be subdivided into broad classes. The followers of Brahmanism—a faith based on the divine revelations of the Vedas with the growth it has received from the Puranas may be sub-divided according to tutelary deities—Vishnu, Sakti, Siva, Suryya and Ganapati. There is, however, no real conflict amongst these great divisions except in the minds of fanatics. To enumerate the subsects will be tedious because they are numerous. Islamism has its Shia, Sunni, Sufi followers with a new sect Ahmedia; Christianity has its well known classes. Buddhism has its northern (*Mahayana*) and southern (*Hinayana*) divisions and Jainism has Svetambari, Digambari and Terapanthi followers. With a numerous variety of unessential forms, one might feel that there are elements of perpetual discord in India, but in substance they are all different phases of the same essence.

Religious faiths are generally most seriously misconstrued and misjudged by the followers of each other. Not unfrequently the interpretation of words and ideas, though they are substantially the same in all religions, leads to discord. Disregard of distinctions between appearances and facts, between signs and symbols and the things signified and represented, results in undesirable conclusions. Not unfrequently again, many of the followers of a religion do not understand its own principles and doctrines. We hope such errors will be dispersed by the convention and we shall gradually know ourselves and each other. Our motto is "Know thyself and know thy neighbours before thou judgest each other."

India with its variety of religious communities living under a tolerant and impartial Government is the most suit-

able place for a Convention of Religions. As the harmony which ordinarily exists between these communities is occasionally broken, Convention such as this is necessary for the well-being of the millions that reside in the country. We have every hope, from the enthusiasm displayed by the different communities, by their heartily joining the convention and sending delegates from distant parts of the country that a succession of Conventions will bring about the wished-for result.

Eternal happiness after the termination of mundane life is the goal of every religion. You may call it *nirvan*, *moksha* or *heaven*. We misunderstand and mistranslate these words but substantially they are the same. They differ according to the side-views we may take. The means of attainment may vary, but the ultimate object is the same. Eternal and unalloyed happiness, whether active or passive in nature is attainable according to Indian conceptions through the transmigration of the soul, through mundane bodies, and according to western conceptions through direct transmission into heaven without the intervention of successive earthly lives, but such happiness is the terminus in all religions of a life of religion, faith and duty. It is so in all creeds, ancient or modern ; but we may leave out of our consideration the animists who are not represented in this Convention.

Avatars, incarnations, saints or heroes have appeared from time to time in different countries for the regeneration and development of man. Moses was a sublime giver of sacerdotal laws. Gautama Buddha appeared in India to teach that knowledge and universal love were the only means to *nirvana*. Jesus of Nazareth was the great Emblem of love and self-sacrifice for the salvation of man. Mahomet preached the equality and brother-hood of man and the worship of the one and only God. Sri Krishna was the symbol of knowledge (*Jnana*), duty (*karma*), and love (*bhakti*). Sublime were the doctrines and teachings of each of the great masters and they have appeared in all ages and countries down to the present day. They had all the same motive, the well-being and regeneration of man.

Country-men and friends, on behalf of the Committee, I welcome you one and all in this first Indian Convention of Religions in the 20th century. Our obligations to you are vast and various. We offer you our heart-felt gratitude and fraternal love. Delegates and representatives of the various religious communities, those who have taken the trouble to

be present in this assembly and those whom circumstances have prevented from being present, I welcome you once more with affectionate salutations..

We all meet on a common platform of love in this Convention, each earnest in the removal of causes of discord and animosity. Universal humanity is our watch-word. Let us fraternally embrace each other.

The following song in Bengali composed by Babu Amrita Lall Basu, one of the proprietors of the Star Theatre and a well-known poet was sung by Babu Kashinath Chatterji of the Star Theatre, the audience standing as long as the song was sung.

ভারতে ধর্ম-সঙ্ঘ ।

চৈত্র ।

১৩১৫

উদ্বোধন সঙ্গীত ।

জগতের পতি, অতিথি তোমার ঘারে ।

অগতির গতি, পদে নতি বারে বারে ॥

স্বরূপেতে তুমি রূপের অতীত,

পুরুষ অনাদি উপাধি রহিত,

সাধকের সাধে কতই কলিত,

যুগে যুগে রূপ নাম যে জলিত,

সর্বনাম তাঁর—অবস্থিত সর্বাধারে ॥

২

পরব্রহ্ম তুমি পরম ঈশ্বর,

ব্রহ্মা বিষ্ণু জিহ্বা বহি মহেশ্বর,

কেহ নহে অন্য তুমিই চৈতন্য,

গণেশ রণেশ রাম নামে গণ্য,

একে ভিন্ন ভিন্ন নামে নূনো বা সাকারে ॥

৩

জগদ্ধাত্রী মাতৃ দুর্গা কালী মায়ী,
 অন্নদা জ্ঞানদা লক্ষ্মী পদ্মালয়া,
 কালী বনমালী রাধা হৃদি রথী,
 পাঞ্চালীর সখা পার্থের সারথি,
 বিশ্বরূপ ধারী মুকুন্দ মুরারি হরে ॥

৪

গুরুবোধি বুদ্ধ, পিন্ধন অভিন,
 সিতাহর দিগম্বর তুমি দেব জিন,
 তুমি খোদাতালা আল্লা মোক্ষদাতা,
 ঈশা মুসা বীণ জাতা ভাবে ভ্রাতা,
 তন্ত্র মন্ত্র যন্ত্র গুরুগ্রন্থ একাধারে ॥

৫

রম্য দৃশ্য বিশ্ব সমাজ আমার,
 মসজিদ, মন্দির, গুরুদরবার,
 অর্চনার চর্চ, সিনাগগ্, মঠ,
 সর্বতীর্থ যোগ জারুবীর তট,
 পরিচয় নর, পর ভেবনারে কঁারে ॥

৬

যে পথে যে যাই, গতি এক ঠাই,
 তোমা' বিনা আর দ্বিতীয় তো নাই,
 ডাকি যাই বলে ডেকে নাও কোলে,
 ছলে ভোলা মন, ধাঁধা খেয়ে দোলে,
 মাতা পিতা পতি গুরু প্রভু সখা,
 কর্তা হর্তা পাতা সব(ই) তুমি একা,
 আমা হ'তে তুমি গো আমার এ সংসারে ;
 সম্প্রদায় ভেদ করিলে উচ্ছেদ রামকৃষ্ণ অবতারে ।

After the song was over, the President rose and delivered the following speech :—

The Presidential Address.

At the opening of the Session held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on Friday, 9th April H. H. The Maharaja of Durbhanga who occupied the chair, said :—

GENTLEMEN,

IT IS with feelings of very great pleasure that I find myself called upon to preside over this great and representative gathering—an assembly consisting of men belonging to all the principal religions of the world, met together in friendly conference, to exchange their views with each other, with the main purpose of finding out, not how far separate they are in creed or ritual but how near they are to each other, when they penetrate through all the outward forms and come face to face with the eternal verities which lie at the inner heart of hearts of all the great religions of the world.

2. Such conferences have been held from remote antiquity. The Brahmins, in the remote period of Indian history, did not, it is true, allow other people to participate in their conferences, but a great change came upon Hindu society with the rise of Buddhism in the sixth century, B. C. The first religious conference in a recognised form was held by the Buddhists at Rajgir (Behar) in 543 B. C. under the auspices of King Ajatasatru. The next conference was held by them at Vaisali (in Mozafferpur) in 443 B. C. Similarly a third conference was held by the Buddhists at Pataliputra (Patna) in 255 B. C. under the auspices of Emperor Asoka. The fourth conference was held in Jalandhara (Punjab) under the auspices of King Kanishka about 78 A. D. As late as in the seventh century A. D. King Harshavardhana of Kanyakubja used to hold religious conferences at the interval of every five years. Similarly the Jains used to convene religious conferences, of which the most notable one was held at Mathura in the second century A. D. Kumarilabhatta and Sankaracharya were perhaps the first batch of Brahmanic reformers that advocated religious conferences in proper forms. Though their aim was a religious conquest

they convened conferences of the followers of all religions existing in their times and entered upon healthy discussion with them. Even during the reign of the Emperor Akbar, we hear of conferences of the followers of different religions, and in more recent times religious conferences, better known as Parliaments of Religions, have been held in Chicago and Venice, and occasionally similar conferences are held in different parts of Europe. Even in Modern India our religious gatherings periodically held in almost all parts of the Empire, call forth vast congregations, of which the greatest is the Kumbha Mela. These melas provide us with opportunities of exercising practical piety and spirituality through the advantages they afford of being filled with magnetism of the greatest saints of all sects and creeds and permeated through and through with the vibrations of the spiritual atmosphere by which the assemblies are generally pervaded.

3. Man has been classified as a religious animal. For go anywhere you like throughout the world, you will find, even amongst the tribes lowest down in the scale of civilization, some acknowledgment of a higher power than themselves, good or evil, of whom they stand in awe and worship after their various fashions of religious ritual.

4. We are met to-day as a Parliament of Religions. This reminds me of the meaning which lies at the root of the word "Religion." It signifies a "binding again"—a binding of man to his brother man, and then again to God. This is, I trust, the spirit which will lie at the back of all our thoughts in the discussions about to take place, and if so, we will find ourselves at the close of this Session, companions-in-arms, although belonging to different regiments of that great army, whose leader and commander is God, against all the opposing forces of evil which surround us in this world.

There are as many religions in the world as there are modes of worship of the Divine Being. Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Mahomedanism, etc., are all religions in as much as they prescribe divine worship in some form or other. Sreekrishna says in The Bhagavadgita :

"I serve men in the way in which they approach Me In every way, O son of Pritha, men follow in my path." (Bhagavadgita, Chapter IV. verse II).

A poet says in Persian :—

"A Mussulman is the slave of Thy face, a Brahman is a prisoner of Thy locks, Thou art in the Kaaba and in the

Mosque and Thou art also in the Fire-worshipper's Shrine and in the Temple of the Hindu.

5. The various religions of the world represent in their votaries the cry in diverse ways of human hearts hungering after their God, if haply they might find Him and become acquainted with His character. But God is in them all, and is leading His children through all their religions, and by disciplinary education according as they are able to bear it into full light of his gracious Fatherhood towards all the children of men.

The time may not yet be near at hand, but the human race, through diverse ways, are all marching on towards one universal religion, *vis* :—"The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man."

We are met here to recognise this great truth and to help to bring it about.

6. We may worship at different earthly shrines, and express our ecclesiastical creeds by differing formulas, and worship through the various modes of ritual and symbols by which our forefathers have worshipped God. But while we differ and sometimes differ largely in these outward forms of creed and ritual ; in the things of the heart and the spiritual life, we find ourselves in the haven of peace. In the outer courts of Ecclesiasticism there has always been war, but in the interior we find that Sainthood is one and the same all the world over.

7. Creeds and Rites and outward Ceremonials and Symbols doubtless expressed some spiritual meaning when they were first instituted and were meant to be helps to the inner life, but it is the almost invariable history of all these things that through the lapse of time these symbols largely become emptied of their original interior significance, and people keep on worshipping the husk when the kernel is gone. This is true in all religions. As I have already said we may dispute about the outward vestures of our faiths, but when we get into the inner *sanctum sanctorum*, we are all at one. There is no dispute about the great characteristics of the spiritual life, such as love, purity, truth, righteousness, goodness, gentleness, helpfulness, forgiveness, brotherly kindness, hope, joy, peace, and all those other qualities which blossom and bear fruit in the highest human character. In this realm we are all at one.

In taking a glance at some of the great religions repre-

sented in this Parliament, time will only permit me to touch on them in a somewhat cursory manner. Nor is it more necessary, seeing there are friends here who will severally give expositions of the Faiths to which they individually belong.

8. In Zoroastrianism we have an actual theological dualism. Two Spirits—one a God creating all that is good, and the other an evil being creating all evil. The pious Zoroastrian, after an honourable toil, goes to an immortality of blessedness in thought, word and deed. If not pious he falls to Hell in passing over the Judge's Bridge, and this Hell consists of evil thoughts, words and deeds, as well as physical torment. (His body rises and he dwells on a rejuvenated earth, through the instrumentality of a Saviour born of Virgin). No religion has so clearly grasped the ideas of guilt and of merit. On the works of men here below a strict reckoning will be held in Heaven according to the deeds entered in the book. Zoroastrianism knows nothing of the remission of sins, but an evil deed can be atoned for by a good one. The end of all things will be one undivided kingdom of God in Heaven and on earth.

9. I now briefly glance at the religion of Buddha in India. In answer to a question as to what he considered the *summum bonum*, Gautama, is reported to have said :—

1. "To serve wise men, and not to serve fools, to give honour to whom honour is due,—this is the greatest blessing.
2. To dwell in a pleasant land, to have done good deeds in a former birth, to have right desires for one's self,—this is the greatest blessing.
3. Much insight and much education, a complete training and pleasant speech—this is the greatest blessing.
4. To succour father and mother, to cherish wife and child, to follow a peaceful calling—this is the greatest blessing.
5. To give alms, and live righteously, to help one's relatives and do blameless deeds—this is the greatest blessing.
6. To cease and abstain from sin, to eschew strong drink, not to be weary in well doing,—this is the greatest blessing.
7. Reverence and lowliness, contentment and gratitude, the regular hearing of the law,—this is the greatest blessing.
8. To be long suffering and meek, to associate with members of the Sangha, religious talk at due seasons,—this is the greatest blessing.
9. Temperance and chastity, a conviction of the four great truths, the hope of Nirvana,—this is the greatest blessing.
10. A mind unshaken by the things of the world, without anguish or passion, and secure,—this is the greatest blessing.
11. They that act like this are in-

vincible on every side they walk in safety, and theirs is the greatest blessing."

Self-conquest and universal charity, these are the foundation thoughts, the web and woof of Buddhism, the melodies, on the variations of which its enticing harmony is built up.

10. The word Islam implies pious resignation and submission to the Divine Will. The Great Arabian Prophet enjoined upon all Mussalmans the observance of five duties : First, the belief that there is but One God ; Second, the observance of five daily prayers ; Third, the giving of Sadka or alms ; Fourth, the fasting for one month during the holy month of Ramazan ; Fifth, pilgrimage to Mecca once in a Mussalman's lifetime. A belief in a judgment to come is an essential part of the creed, teaching men that they ought to live their lives seriously and not to waste them in follies. Every Moslem is every other Moslem's brother. In social gradations the rich man is considered to be the natural protector of the poor, and the poor man takes his place at the table of the rich. Nowhere in Mahomedan society is there any invidious distinction between rich and poor, and not less than one-fortieth of their goods is given to the benefit of the poor. The above is the pure and true essence of the great Mussalman religion.

11. I would now briefly refer to Christianity. Jesus Christ lived in Palestine nearly 2,000 years ago. Here we tread on historical ground. Jesus Christ lived to the age of 33 years. He claimed to be the Son of God and the Son of Man. His great distinctive message to His own countrymen, and through them to the world, was that God was not only the Creator, the Upholder, the Ruler of all things, but that above all these, He was a Father seeking to bring His human family back to Himself in order that they might live the Blessed life in this world, and afterwards in the Eternal home above. Jesus Christ lived up to His own teaching. He wrote nothing, but imbued His own immediate followers with his wonderful sayings and with His own spirit. These men in turn lighted up the then known world with the words of their Master and so the religion of Christ spread until we behold the Christendom of to-day. Jesus Christ, after a three years' public ministry, was put to death on the Roman Cross, but His followers believe that He rose again on the third day to die no more ; that His Spirit now pervades all things ; that the attractive power of His Cross was never felt so much as it is to-day, and that the law of His life of

sacrificial love was maintained by simply doing the will of His Father and in placing implicit trust in Him. The great principles of the kingdom which he wished to set up on earth was the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Christianity holds out the forgiveness of sins and the sure hope of an eternal life after death.

12. The Hindu Religion, to which I belong, is one which stretches far back into antiquity. To-day it is the religion under various forms, of two hundred and seven millions of the people of India. Hindus are divided and marked off into manifold interior diversities of worship belonging to different ages and different grades of society, and the rites vary with the places at which they are practised, and the incarnations to which they are addressed. Like nearly all the older religions of the world, it has a set of forms for the common people, and a different inner meaning for the educated and initiated. The inner meaning is that all the great elemental forces of Nature are manifestations of the all-pervading divine energy, and that man himself is but a vessel which contains the divine particle giving thought and utterance to visible humanity. The Hindu doctrine is that God pervades all Nature, so that in worshipping Nature, you actually worship the Divine Spirit in every atom of matter. Manu, the well-known founder of Hindu socio-religious institutes, speaks of ten injunctions as follows :—

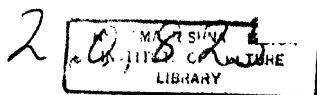
“Resolution, patience, self-restraint, honesty, purity, restraint of the organs, devotion, knowledge, truthfulness and absence of anger are the ten constituents of *Dharma*. Brahmans, who study these ten, act up to them, attain a supreme course of existence.” (Manusmṛiti, Chap. VI, verses 92, 93.)

Similarly, Manu speaks of ten prohibitions as follows :

“Covetousness, malice and scepticism constitute the threefold evil act of the mind. Abuse, untruth, back-biting and frivolous irrelevant talk are the fourfold evil act done by the voice. Stealing, killing without the sanction of law, and adultery with another's wife are called the threefold evil act of the body.” (Manusmṛiti, Chap. XII, verses 5, 6, & 7.)

13. The ultimate good revealed through the Hindu religion is the freedom of the soul from the body to anything that has sensation, and its return through a succession of of existences to the infinite Spirit whence it came. The books of Hinduism are full of moral precepts and virtuous maxims enjoining piety, austerity and the abnegation of self

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for the conduct of life in this world. A good Hindu is a good man. He claims that in pure Hinduism is the spirit of true religion, Sanatana Dharma, a definition which proclaims its catholicity and universality. According to the Vedas and Shastras there are seventy-two divisions and innumerable sub-divisions of Sanatana Dharma, and these subdivisions are again divided in numerous branches which I will not trouble you to name, but will put them in an Appendix to this address for future reference.

14. I must now draw these remarks to a close. Delegates and representatives of the various religions of the world, who have come from far and near to attend this great Congress, I extend to you a most cordial welcome, and our heartiest thanks are due to all who have come prepared to read papers on their own distinctive faiths, and otherwise to take part in the proceedings of the Session. I trust you will return to your homes feeling that you have had a real pleasure in being here, and that you will carry away with you the reward of having contributed in no small degree to a better understanding of one another and of the several faiths to which we belong.

Gentlemen, in conclusion, I have to thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me. I have great hopes as to the results which will follow this Parliament of Religions. The grand ultimate test of the value of any religion is its ability so to mould its worshippers as to turn out good men of high spiritual character. A religion that fails to do this is of little use to humanity. Amid all our diverse faiths, there is only one end in view and everything is moving on, independent of our wills, to—

“One God, one law, one element
And one far-off Divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.”

In the end there will only be one religion which will express itself in Love to God, in Love to our Brother Man. May this parliament be the means of helping on that glorious day in the history of the world.

At the call of the President, the following theses were read one after another.

Theses read on the 1st day were:—

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Judaism | ... by Revd. I. A. Isaac, | Calcutta, |
| 2. " | ... " | M. E. D. Cohen " |
| 3. " | ... " | N. E. David " |

4. Zoroastrianism ... by Mr. Jevanji Jamesetji Modi Kolaba.
(Read in short by Dr. S. C. Vidyabhusan, M.A.)
5. Buddhism ... by Mr. Dawson Dup of Gontak,
Darjeeling.
6. „ ... „, Angarika, H. Dharmapala, Calcutta.
7. Brahmoism ... by Professor Benoyendra Nath
Sen, M.A., Calcutta.

There was a break between 2 and 2-30 P.M., and when the delegates and the audience met again at 2-30 P.M., the concert again played the music.

SECOND DAY.

The 10th April 1909.

The President having taken his seat the concert played a sweet tune. This was followed by the following Bengali song composed by Babu G. C. Ghosh, a poet of great reputation and sung by Babu Pulin Behari Mitra, a member of the Vivekananda Society.

মিলন সঙ্গীত ।

বাগেশী ।

সিদ্ধ শৈল গ্রহ জ্যোতি সাকার বা নিরাকারে ।
সমভাবে বিভূ হেরে ভাবুক হৃদয়াগারে ॥
অজ্ঞানতা অভিমানে, বন্ধ করে নামে স্থানে,
দেবাদেব ভেদ জানে, তর্কযুক্তি অহঙ্কারে ॥
যথায় বিরাজে শান্তি, দন্দ আসি করে ভ্রান্তি,
সাধু হেরি প্রেমকান্তি, ভাসে প্রেম-পারাবারে ॥
মিলে যথা সাধুবর্গ, ধরায় তথায় স্বর্গ,
আজি এ মিলনোৎসর্গ, দেব-দন্দ হরিবারে ॥

The President then called upon the delegates to read their respective theses. The theses read were--

1. Christianity (Protestantism) ... by Revd. H. Anderson, Calcutta.
2. „ (Roman Catholic)... „ N. L. Ghosh „

There was the usual mid-day adjournment and the following theses were then read—

3. Christianity (Penta Costal League)...by Rev. Samuel A. Chisolm,
4. Islamism by Moulvie Mirza Abul Fazl.
5. " " Khoda Baksh.
6. " (Ahmedia Sect) " Mohamed Ali of
Quadian.
7. Brahmoism by Mr. S. N. Tagore.
8. Sikhism " Natha Sing, Bura Sangat,
Barabazar, Calcutta.
9. Deva Dharma " Deva Ratan, Secretary,
Deva Samaj.

After the close of the proceedings of the second day, the delegates to the Convention and the members of the Committee held an informal meeting at the house of the President where it was proposed that the Convention would be held annually by turns at all the principal cities in India. It was also proposed that there should be a Central Board and Provincial Boards for carrying out the objects of the Convention.

After the second day's song was over Rai Narendra Nath Seh Bahadur delivered the following speech.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.—As one who has always taken a great interest in the moral and religious progress of the country and has consistently maintained that it is religion that alone supplies a sure and stable basis for every movement that has for its object the promotion of human happiness, I join most heartily in the proceedings of this Convention of Religions. I wish to say at the outset that when the idea of holding this Convention was mooted, I welcomed it with very great pleasure and that when subsequently I was invited to be a member of the Executive Committee, I considered it both as a duty and an honour to accept the invitation. I am glad to be able to bear my part, however humble, in the proceedings of this learned and cultured assembly and I earnestly hope that the Convention now assembled may prove to be the beginning of the spiritual awakening of our land—once known as the Mother of Religions and the spiritual teacher of the universe. Yet, though we, Hindus, have legitimate cause to be proud of our ancient philosophy, and of our still more ancient religion, we are not here to enter into controversies with our brethren of other faiths. We are all assembled here as children of the one God to exchange greetings of spiritual brotherhood, and to let each other know some of the truths

of our different religions. It will be found, however, I am sure, when we have conversed and compared notes, that, despite seemingly outward differences, despite divergences of formulas and terms, we are all in reality making for one object, that object being the attainment of the supreme bliss which comes from the knowledge of and communion with our one common Maker.

Ladies and gentlemen, we should regard it as a happy omen that we opened this first Convention of Religions in the metropolis of India on Good Friday—a day which to our Christian brethren is one of the greatest days from the beginning of the world to its end. They hold that on this day Jesus Christ finished the great work of the redemption of mankind, submitting to his painful death at Calvary. Imagine the great life sacrificed for suffering and sorrowing humanity. May we not hope that the inauguration of our Religious Convention on such an auspicious day presages the world-union—the world-redemption—which the great founder of Christianity consummated by his sacrifice on the Cross? May we not hope also that it furnishes the basis for the commingling his of the Occident and the Orient, for was not the Son of Nazareth an Asiatic like the other great world saviours—Krishna, Buddha and Mahomed?

This Convention presents unique sight in Calcutta and probably in all India. In following the expositions of the different faiths by their respective exponents, one cannot fail to be convinced by the fact that Universal Brotherhood must be the inevitable outcome of such an assembly. In India more than in any other country such a Convention is necessary to tone down racial animosities and to induce that brotherly feeling which is essential to the peace, progress and prosperity of the country.

To me, ladies and gentlemen, this Convention appeals with particular interest, as it comes at a time which we generally regard as the awakening of the national consciousness of the people of this land. After many centuries, the spirit of nationalism has begun to move the mass of the Indian population; but that places us only in a position of increased responsibility. We have arrived at the cross-road which leads in one direction to solid and sure progress by the exercise of the powers which come from moral restraint and religious communion, and in the other to the shadowy and illusive progress which proceeds from materialism. It is superfluous to point out to an assembly like this that it

was the former course which India followed in the ancient days when her moral and spiritual glory as well as her material prosperity, extorted the envy and admiration of the world. Talk of literature, arts and science, who could rival India? Talk of religion and philosophy, was it not India that gave them to the Near and Far East and to the Farther West? The greatness of India was due to her moral and spiritual force; and it is just the loss of this force that in a later age brought about her downfall among the nations of the world. I do not desire however to enlarge upon this point since the least knowledge of Indian history should acquaint us with the causes of our national decadence.

The question which confronts us at this moment, is how we should direct our national life, so that it may have a healthy development. I am sure that all of us assembled here are agreed upon this point, and also upon the conclusion that the question of religion has a very important bearing upon the problem of our nation-building. It may be questioned how can there be agreement and unity among so many races and so many creeds in India? I say, this is quite possible. If we only observe faithfully and strictly the tenets of our respective religions, we shall not fail to love each other as brothers—brothers in spiritual kinship, which after all, is the strongest binding force of the human race. The fundamental principles of all religions are the same. The Vedas, the Tripitikas, the Koran, the Gospel, and the Zendavesta differ little, if at all, from each other, in respect of the moral teachings contained in them. "Love your fellowman"—is the injunction of every religion, though it may be expressed in different forms in different dialects. It is religion that alone inculcates the love I have spoken of. That being so, religion is essential both to individual and collective happiness. If so much is admitted, the importance of a Convention like this, bringing within its fold the representatives of various races and creeds, will need no demonstration.

Ladies and gentlemen, every lover of India—every lover of humanity—will concede that the idea of holding a Religious Convention like this is the happiest that can be conceived. This Convention and others like it will have the effect of not only directing our attention to our religious needs, but also of weaning us from unwholesome tendencies born of pure materialism—which have led to many evils and much suffering in our midst.

I regard this movement, therefore, as God's own movement. I am glad to hear that it is proposed to make this Convention the forerunner of future Conventions like this every year in different parts of India. We have hitherto had an annual political Congress, and several political Conferences, and along with them, happily, a Social Conference, an Industrial Conference, a Temperance Conference, and so on. But what about our religion? Is not a Religious Conference the most important of all? Has all the political work we have done for so many years put an end yet to Hindu-Mahomedan riots, or to Shiah and Sunni differences? But, religion would have done that, if we had paid sufficient attention to it. On the other hand, note the positive evils which the want of religion has brought in our midst. What are the troubles which India is passing through, but the fruit of irreligion and godless education? What is this Anarchism but the fruit of godless education? It should therefore, be obvious to every thinking mind that a Convention of Religions, such as the one we are holding now, is of greater importance to the progress and well being of India than any movement existing to day. If we have needed one thing more than another, it is a Religious Congress or Conference or Convention, just as you may choose to call it, to discuss various questions relating to our moral and religious progress, and to decide how we should bring up the rising generation, so that it may take its due place worthily when its time comes. The development of character, more than the development of the intellect, is necessary for the healthy growth of a nation. Hence, the duty of every true patriot in India is to direct the attention of his fellowmen to the purer religious ideals which once constituted the greatest glory of this land. It is sad to have to think that there should be so few institutions in Calcutta devoted to the cause of religion. We have a Gita Society which is doing some good in its humble way, and lately our Brahmo brethren have started an institution, called the Devalaya for the advancement of spiritual unity among the different sections of the community. There is yet another notable institution called the Vivekananda Society which has for its object the dissemination of moral and spiritual truths among the younger generation. We should have more societies and more institutions like these to bring home to the people the importance of religion in individual, social, and national life.

Ladies and gentlemen, everyone should pray in his daily

devotions that not only India but the whole world may throw off the shackles of materialism, on account of which the human race is sinking lower and lower down every day in the abyss of misery and suffering. "The world is fast bound in fetters," said Lord Buddha, and he showed the way to deliverance in the following words : 'Be earnest, be thoughtful, be holy. Keep steadfast, watch over your own hearts. He who holds fast to the law and discipline, and faints not, shall cross the ocean of life, and make an end of sorrow". It may not be possible for us all to pursue the course of asceticism and renunciation, which Lord Buddha so vividly illustrated in his incarnated life, but the duty is imposed upon every one of us to exercise self control and to avoid falling into sin. Individual sins become eventually national sins, and we have the teaching of history as to the suffering and sorrow which befall a nation that betakes itself to the path against which it has been warned by God. Need we wonder why we are suffering so much to day? The Hindu and Buddhist Scriptures alike assign the same causes for human suffering. One or two quotations will not be out of place. In the *Anguttara Nikya Brahmana Vagga Sutra Pataka*, Lord Buddha in reply to, the Mahasara Brahmins as to the cause of desolation in a country says, that when men become unrighteous the gods cease to send down rains. Then comes famine caused by death of corn in the field owing to blights or mildews. Thus many people die and the land becomes depopulated. Again in the *Anguttara Nikaya chatukka Nipata* (page 98. Siam Edition), Lord Buddha exhorting the Bhikkhus says :—When the rulers or their representatives become unrighteous the Brahman householders become unrighteous ; when they become unrighteous, men in the towns and villages become unrighteous, when they become unrighteous, the influence of the sun and the moon becomes poisonous. Then the planetary influences become bad, the days and nights are affected. The seasons are changed, poisonous winds begin to blow, the roads become impassable, the gods become angry, the rains do not fall regularly, the corn-fields become impregnated with poison and when people eat the produce of these fields, they become weak, and many diseases attack them." Much the same thing is said by the religions of Christ and Mahomed. So, God speaks to us trumpet-tongued through various happenings. Look at the dreadful calamities which we hear of from every part of the globe. The appalling disaster which overtook Italy, only at the beginning of this year is a significant warning to mankind.

Swift destruction is sure to come to all who transgress the laws of God. The Hebrew Scriptures tell us how Sodom, the fairest among the cities of the Jordan Valley, and called "the Garden of the Lord," for its fertility and beauty was razed to the ground because of the iniquities of its people.

The history of every race in the world bears testimony to the sufferings which ensue when unrighteousness corrupts the heart of the people. Therefore it is essential that we should make religion the basis of our national life and of every movement with which we as a nation are identified. Religion and nationalism should, indeed follow two parallel lines. Accordingly the conduct of life, individual and social, must accord with the laws of Nature. It is immaterial what faith is professed by an individual, since all faiths contain the same cardinal principles of love, charity and humanity. But let there be earnestness and sincerity in the profession, and, above all, a strenuous endeavour to live upto the laws of God. I may say that sin, which consists in breaking those laws, is committed, not by word and deed alone, but also by thought. Meditated sin is as deadly as actual sin. The former enfeebles the mind, perverts the understanding and debases the soul, quite the same way as the latter. So, let there be a thorough cleansing of the heart of every individual.

Ladies and gentlemen, would it not be much easier for us, the three hundred millions of India's children, to live happily and peacefully together by following the injunctions of our respective religions? All troubles which afflict India will speedily vanish, if the Christian rulers, on the one hand, conform strictly to their Christian principles, and the people on the other, adhere to the true teachings of their sages and sacred books. It is impossible to disguise the alarm at the condition of our national life, when we see the laws of God trifled with in various ways. The daily record of passing events testifies to this fact. Not only do we hear glaring perversions of our great Scripture—the Gita, for instance but we see brutal passion and violent crimes aroused thereby. Godlessness prevails largely in our educational institutions ; fervent devotion and vital piety have yielded in many places to shallow formalism ; and with the result that in the name of religion, many grossly irreligious acts are being perpetrated. Hence, as the poet has said :—

"Lo ! thy dread empire, Chaos, is restored ; Light dies before thy uncreating word ; Thy hand, great Anarch ! lets The curtain fall, and universal darkness buries all".

Our only hope of salvation lies in our ceasing to repeat our sins and in our being true to God. Let us not ignore the voice of God, heard in the various messages of warning sent by Him from time to time. 20825.

Yet, ladies and gentlemen, I have faith in the mercy of God, and I know that he will not forsake us. This very Convention of Religions seems to me to be His work. Who knows that it will not mark the beginning of a great religious revival in India—a revival in which sectarianism will be forgotten, and the cardinal principle of brotherhood will be established among the various races and nationalities inhabiting this land. Such a revival has, indeed, been predicted by all the great religions of the world. We have it in the Gita that Avatars shall appear from age to age to exalt the righteous and to mete out due punishment to the transgressors of the divine laws. The judgment-day, when Lord Jesus Christ will come down from heaven to judge “the living and the dead,” is pointedly referred to in the Christian Scriptures. Islam points to the future advent of the Paigambar. The Buddhist sacred books specify the time when the next Avatar—the Maitreya Buddha—will appear in the world. The year 1911 will complete the first half of the five thousand years after the Parinirvana of Goutama Buddha and at the end of that period the Maitreya Buddha is to appear. So in a couple of years, the world will enter upon an important epoch in its religious history, namely the 2500th anniversary of the departure of Lord Buddha which will undoubtedly herald a Buddhist revival.

It is certain, therefore, that within the next few years we shall hear the joyous notes of the coming religious revival in India. We are on the threshold of a new era and it is meet that we Hindus, Buddhists, Parsis, Mahomedans, Christians and others—all children of the soil—should meet on a common unsectarian platform to lift up our eyes to God and to implore His aid to cleanse us of our impurities and to give us the spiritual grace necessary for our national well-being. For this reason I feel proud to be associated with this movement and I fervently pray that it may be the means of paving the way to India's moral and spiritual regeneration, and also of establishing brotherly love among the diverse races and sects of the Indian population.

My brethren, it matters not whether we be followers of Krishna, Christ, Buddha, or Mahomed. They were all world saviours and humanity will ever be beholden to them. Let

us only be firm in our religious faiths and perform scrupulously what our religions tell us to do and we shall have secured our salvation as a nation.

My brethren, man fixes his destiny by his own choice : and so does a nation. Let us decide what our destiny should be. Are we to suffer the long account of our sins to accumulate till God calls us to our judgment and passes the inevitable verdict upon us ? Or are we to proceed onward peacefully on the path of progress with the blessing of God and the good will of all nations cheering us on our way ? Some day the signal will be given for judgment to be executed ; it is left to us to decide whether we shall live or perish as a nation. Brethren, let us watch, therefore, and pray, and strive always that we may be accounted worthy to stand as a nation.

With all humility my dear brethren, I commend to you the words of Lord Buddha—"Work out your salvation with diligence."

Third Day.

The 11th April, 1909.

The attendance was the largest on that day. The President having taken the chair the concert played a tune followed by a Bengalee song which was composed by Babu Lalit Mohan Ghosal and sung by Babu Kasi Nath Chatterjee. This was followed by a song in Hindustani to the accompaniment of the Pakhwaj.

Then at the call of the President Babu Sarada Charan Mittra rose and announced that since the first sitting of the Convention he had received a large number of letters and telegrams from Hindus and followers of other faiths throughout India conveying sympathy with the Convention. This, the speaker said, was a very good sign. The feeling of brotherhood had permeated even into the orthodox section of Hinduism, and the speaker had received a message of sympathy from Jagatguru Sankaracharya of Puri. The Convention which was about to close its first sitting would not, he believed, terminate that day, but would inaugurate a new era in the religious world.

Babu Sarada Charan then mentioned a large number of theses he had received late. Some of these theses, he announced, would be published in the official report book of the Convention. The following is the list of the theses he mentioned.

(1) Unity of Religion by Ashutosh Mittra of Ghosa near Haripal ; (2) Sikhism by Jodh Singh ; (3) Religion and Religions by Satyananda Santa Sarma of Mylapore ; (4) Religion Generally by Pundit Nanda Lal ; (5) Aryan Philosophy by Swami Bhaskarananda of Jubbulpore ; (6) Mahapurushya Vaishnavism by R. Barkakati, B. L. of Lower Assam ; (7) Beer Saivism by H. K. Beerbasa of Banglore ; (8) Sadharan Dharma by Swami Sijunacharya ; (9) Ramanuj Vaishnavism by Srinivas Ayanagar of Muslipatam ; (10) Vishishtadvaita by M. T. Nara Sing Ayanagar of Bangalore ; (11) Sikhism by Nathu Sing ; (12) Standpoint of Vaidic Religion by Charu Chandra Chattopadhyaya ; (13) Geneological table and other papers by Lakshipati, President of the Sudhi Sabha ; (14) Common Image Worship of the Aryans and Non-Aryans by B. B. Chakravarti of Giridih ; (15) Manav Dharma by Haridas Khandakal ; (16) Vedanta Philosophy by Lakshminath of Lucknow ; (17) a thesis by Pundit Ramprosad Sarma of Bankipore ; and (18) Philosophy of Sleep.

Some of the letters and telegrams, mentioned above by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, are given here ;—

No. 1.

NASHIPUR RAJBATI.

The 4th April, 1909.

My dear Sarada Babu

Thanks for your kind invitation to attend the Convention of Religions in India which is proposed to be held at the Town Hall from the 9th to the 11th April ; but I regret I shall not be in Calcutta then and am unable to have the pleasure of attending the same. But I have full sympathy with it and I wish it to be a success.

I am

Yours sincerely.

(Sd.) RAJA OF NASHIPUR.

No. 2.

8, ELYSIUM ROW,

Calcutta, the 8th April, 1909.

Mr. Justice Vincent regrets he will be unable to attend the meetings of the Convention of Religions in India, as he will be away from Calcutta.

No. 3.

18, ROYD STREET,

Calcutta, the 7th April, 1909.

Mr. Justice S. Sharfuddin thanks the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India for their kind invitation to the Convention to be

held at the Town Hall on the 9th, 10th and 11th April 1909, but regrets to say that he will not be able to attend the meetings as he will be away from Calcutta on these days.

No. 4.

"BURDWAN HOUSE,"
CHAULIAGUNJA,
Cuttack, the 7th April, 1909.

Raja Ban Behary Kapur thanks the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India for their very kind invitation to be present at the Town Hall on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 9th, 10th and 11th April 1909, between the hours of 12 A.M. and 5 P.M., but regrets very much being unable to accept it as he is away from the town.

No. 5.

"THE PALACE," BURDWAN,
The 4th April, 1909.

The Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Burdwan thanks the President of the Convention of Religions in India for his kind invitation to the meetings of the Convention on the 9th, 10th and 11th April, next, but sincerely regrets that he shall not be able to attend owing to Estate work, and nevertheless wishes the Convention very hearty and all success.

No. 6.

LALGOLA RAJBARI,
The 1st April, 1909.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant inviting me to attend the Convention of Religions to be held in the Town Hall of Calcutta on the 9th, 10th and 11th instants, but exceedingly sorry to let you know that owing to my having been attacked with cold attended with pain all over the body I am unable to attend it. Hoping to be excused,

I remain,

Sir,

Yours sincerely,

JOGENDRA NARAN ROY.

No. 7.

The Raja of Dighapatia thanks the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India for their kind invitation but regrets his inability to accept it owing to his absence from town.

No. 8.

CHOWKHAMBA, BENARES,

Dated, 6th April 1909.

Dear Sirs,

I am much obliged for your kind invitation to attend the Convention of Religions to be held in the Town Hall of Calcutta but I much regret that I would not be able to attend owing to my indifferent health and hope to be excused. But I fully sympathize with the movement.

Yours sincerely,

MUNSHI MADHOLAL.

No. 9.

7th April, 1909.

The Maharaja of Mourbhanj begs to thank the President of the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India, for their kind invitation to be present at the Convention, which he would have very much liked to have complied with. He regrets that pressure of work and absence from Calcutta prevent him from accepting the invitation.

No. 10.

BAIDYANATH JUNCTION,

The 5th April 1909.

Dear Sir,

I thank the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India for the invitation to their Convention on the 9th, 10th and 11th instants, but I regret I shall not be able to attend it, as I do not like to go to Calcutta just now owing to the prevalence of small-pox there.

Yours faithfully,

GOPENDRA KRISHNA DEB.

No. 11.

BENARES CITY,

April 6, 1909

The President of the Theosophical Society much regrets that she can not be in Calcutta on the 9th, 10th and 11th April, 1909, but she wishes all success to the Convention of Religions in India.

No. 12.

10, MUKTARAM BABU'S STREET,

Calcutta, the 6th April, 1909.

Sirs,

I regret to inform you that ill health will not permit me to attend the meetings to be held at the Town Hall on the 9th, 10th and 11th instants. I hereby tender my apology. *

I have the honour to be,

Sirs,

Your most obedient servant,

CHANDRAKANTA TARKALANKER.

No. 13.

RAMKRISHNA MISSION,
20, PUDDU PUKER LANE,
Calcutta, the 7th April, 1909.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your kind invitation to the Convention of Religions in India to be held in the Town Hall on the 9th, 10th and 11th April next, I regret I shall have to deny myself the honour and privilege of attending the meetings as I am ill and almost confined to bed.

Wishing you every success,

I remain,
Dear Sir,
Yours truly,
DEBENDRA NATH MAJUMDAR.

No. 14.

PURI,
The 5th April, 1909.

Dear Sir,

I am glad to acknowledge the receipt of your invitation letter, dated the 2nd April 1909, requesting me to attend the Convention of Religions ; I have full sympathy with it. I shall be glad enough to do anything that will give any effect to our religion.

But I am sorry to say that my local duties and business will not give me time to attend the meetings.

Yours sincerely,
JAGAT GURU SANKARACHARYYA.

No. 15.

JAGATPUR ASRAM,
P. O. MAHAMUNI,
Chittagong, the 6th April, 1909.

Dear Sir,

I am commanded by my Guru, Swami Purnananda of the Jagatpur Asram, to acknowledge with thanks, the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant inviting him to the Convention of Religions in India. He regrets he will not be able to attend personally ; but I hope, with his permission to send you a paper explaining the tenets and practices followed by the members of our society for the consideration of the Convention.

Yours truly,
SARODA KANTA SEN,
Secretary, Jagatpur Asram.

No. 16.

SADHARAN BRAHMO SAMAJ,
211, CORNWALLIS STREET,
Calcutta, 6th April, 1909.

The Secretary to the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj thanks heartily the Secretary to the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India for his invitation to be present at the Convention and regrets to say that he will not be able to attend the Convention as he will be out of town on the 9th, 10th and 11th April.

No. 17.

3, HASTINGS STREET,
Calcutta, 6th April, 1909.

My dear Sir,

As I am leaving for Ranchi tomorrow, I regret very much that I shall not be able to attend the Convention of Religions to be held on the 9th, 10th and 11th instants. The Convention has my warmest sympathy and I expect that great good will come out of it.

Yours sincerely,
J. CHOWDHURI.

No. 18.

81, UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD,
Calcutta, 6th April, 1909.

Dear Sir,

Be pleased to accept my best thanks for your kind invitation to attend the Convention of Religions in India to be held at the Town Hall from the 9th to the 11th instant. I regret that owing to ill health I shall not be able to attend the meetings. I regret also, that your invitation and the papers enclosed therein having come late in the last week, I could not notice the matter in the "Unity and the Minister," but I shall be glad to write something about it in our next issue,

Wishing the Convention every success,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
MOHENDRA NATH BOSE,
Editor, U. M.

No. 19.

PALLATUR,
30th March, 1909.

To

The Religious Convention Committee,

CALCUTTA.

Respected Sirs,

It is with great pleasure that I sympathise with the golden enter-

prise you have undertaken, which is quite necessary at a time as this when sectarian differences have so deeply manifested themselves into our land as to obstruct our social improvement. May the Almighty endow you all with sufficient strength of body and mind to carry on this holy crusade against bigotry and superstition.

I hope all my learned, generous and sympathetic brethren who are well-wishers of our mother land, will not fail to co-operate with you, in this venerable attempt which is purely a "labour of love."

I beg to remain,

Respected sirs,

Your most obedient servant,

PALLATUR,
Madura District.

W. C. PAMA RAO.

No. 20.

107, SHAMBAZAR STREET,
7th April, 1909.

Mr. R. G. Kar thanks the Committee of the Convention of Religions in India for the honour it has done by inviting him to the Convention at the Town Hall on the 9th, 10th and 11th April, 1909, and regrets his inability to be present at the Convention on account of previous engagement.

No. 21.

MYLAPORE,
Madras, 7th April, 1909.

Dear Sir,

I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your circular of the 30th March. I regret very much I am unable to honour myself by being present at the Convention and read my paper on "Ramanuj Vaishnavism" in two parts, which you have kindly accepted.

I hope you have already arranged by this time to have my paper read at the Convention by some substitute of your own selection.

I thank you for the trouble you must have taken, and shall look forward to the reports of your proceedings with great interest.

I beg to remain,

Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

T. RAJAGOPAL ACHARIER,

Assistant Prof., Law College,

MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

No. 22.

BERHAMPORE,
Murshedabad, 6th April, 1909.

Babu Sarada Charan Mitra, M.A., B.L.,
Chairman, Convention of Religions in India,
CALCUTTA.

Dear Sir,

While thanking you for your kind invitation to be present at the Convention of Religions in India, I regret to inform you that I shall not be able to be present on the occasion owing to previous engagement.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
BOIKUNT NATH SEN.

A telegram.

President, Religious Convention, 85, Grey Street, Calcutta.

President Gatha Society wishes Convention complete success, hopes fruitful results will follow and Convention become annual fixture.

At the call of the President the following theses were then read by the respective delegates—

1. Anubhabadwaita Vedanta by Mr. G. Krishna Shastri of Madras.
2. Saiva Siddhanta by Mr. Nallaswami Pillay of Rajmahendry.
3. Ballavacharya by Mr. Lallu Bhai Parekh of Ahmedabad.

The Convention here rose for the usual recess.

The Convention having re-assembled after the adjournment, Babu Sarada Charan Mitra announced that he had just then received an important paper on Vaishnavism by Babu Sisir Kumar Ghose. He was sorry that there was no time to read the paper before the Convention.

Babu Sarada Charan Mitra then read portions from the paper on Ramanuj Vaishnavism by Mr. Sreenivash Iyengar of Muslipatam, the writer being absent. The paper dealt with the life and teachings of Ramanuj.

4. Vaishnavism by G. C. Ghose.
(Read by Babu K. B. Sen.)

Swami Premananda Bharati then rose and said as follows :—

Mr. President, ladies, friends and brother delegates,—I rise with a feeling of intense joy to address this wonderful assembly gathered together by my friend and brother countryman, Babu Sarada Charan, Mitra and rejoice that His

Highness the Maharaja of Darbhanga is presiding over the assembly. (Cheers). I call this assembly wonderful, because it has been convened by Hindus and they have asked the followers of all other religions to come and take part in the deliberations. Hindu idolators—if you like to call them so—have extended their invitation to the “Monothiests.” I say this is a very auspicious occasion. I greet you all.

At this stage the speaker read a number of Sanskrit slokas which were addressed to Shri Krishna by Brahma, and a hymn.

Beloved ones of my Lord, I have been told to speak within the limit of thirty minutes. Attempts to bind me within the limit of time have failed in America, but I bow to the chairman of this assembly. I was to speak on Vaishnavism, but my friend Babu G. C. Ghose, whose paper has been read just now, has spoken so much on Vaishnavism preached by Sri Chaitanya that it is quite unnecessary to add a word more. I would therefore speak on idolatry.

To you I say I am an idolator and am proud of being so. There is not a single man who is not an idolator. It is the very instinct of man to be an idolator. We can never love any one—be that a man or a woman, without being an idolator. When we worship any one, we idolise that person. In the spiritual as well as the material life, we do almost the same thing. The question may arise, “We may idolise a man or a woman, but why should we idolise God?” I would tell the critic, “My dear sir, you idolise money but you don’t idolise God, because He has no form !” God, let me tell you, is personal as well as impersonal. Energy and spirit are inseparable. Spirit is the essence of energy. Out of His form, He has created the Universe. World is the manifestation of His Will. He has a mind. Then there are the senses, as mind cannot act without them. The senses cannot work for a single moment without the counterpart organs. Therefore God has a mind and God is formful. There was not a single man in England to challenge me, when I put forward this argument ; I put this challenge here now, and if there is any one, let him come. One word more and I have done I ask if you say that Vaishnavism is bad. A tree is known by its fruit. Hinduism has produced extremely harmonious individuals. Hindu idolators worship idols of the spirit and the world worship the idols of matter. Here is a country where religion is the business of life. I ask you to see into the results and the production of this idol worship. Be not guided by dogmas and there are dogmas in every church.

Blessed be the Hindu mother that could produce such eminent men of whom we all boast and blessed be the Hindu home that could hold up in its bosom such men.

Brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, you are all lovers of God ; I embrace you ; I do not see in this assembly representatives of different religions, but I see here all lovers of God. I say unto you, I love you all as you are the lovers of my beloved. You may go to the church, to the masjid or to the temple, but there is only one Beloved Who is loved by all. God Himself is love. There is one goal for all fighting creeds. It is useless to say that this or that is the best religion. Love absolutely is the goal. Any religion that makes out the path to the attainment of love is a great thing. All religions are His. Let us pray to God on this day of great religious union.

The speaker concluded by reading a prayer in Sanskrit.

The following theses were then read.

5. Arya Samaj by Mr. Bal Krishna Sahai of Ranchi.

(Taken as read after a short speech by the proposed reader
Babu K. P. Chatterjee.)

6. Sanatan Dharma by Swami Saradananda of Bellur Math,—read
by Swami Nirmalananda.

7. Theosophy by Babu J. N. Mitra.

8. Soura Upasana by Babu Ballai Chand Mullick of Calcutta.

9. Shakticism by Pundit Jnanendra Nath Tantra Ratna.

The last two theses could not be read through for want of time.

THE END OF THE SESSION.

Mr. Nallaswami Pillay of Rajmahindry proposed, Moulvi Mahammed Mustapha Khan seconded, Mr. Dharmapala of Calcutta, Mr. Lallu Bhui Parekh of Ahmedabad, Dr. Chuni Lal Bose, Rai Bahadur, of Calcutta and another gentleman supported a resolution thanking the chairman and the Committee for the trouble taken by them in connection with the Convention.

Mr. Parekh said that all honour was due to Bengal and the Bengalis for the success of the Convention. Swadeshism which had been inaugurated by them (the Bengalis) was progressing towards the prosperity of India. The idea of the Convention also came from the Bengalis and he thought that special thanks were due to them. The whole of India would be proud of Bengal when their future generation would read the history of the present day. He, in conclusion proposed three

cheers to the Maharaja for the trouble he had undertaken and the sacrifice he made in presiding over the Convention. This was warmly responded to by the audience.

The speech by Dr. Chuni Lal Basu is given below :—

GENTLEMEN,

The labours of the first Convention of Religions are over ; its proceedings have been brought to a happy closure with the proposal of a most cordial vote of thanks to the august personage who was graciously pleased to preside over its important deliberations. But if every one has done his part of duty in regard to this Convention, we, as audience, have some duty to perform as well, specially when we have been publicly thanked by the last speaker for our attendance and attention. Gentlemen, this Convention of Religions is the first of its kind in India and we all earnestly hope that it will fulfil the noble object with which it has been started, *viz.*, that it will help in removing the causes of discord among people professing different creeds and in making them understand and love each other better. For this happy result, which, we all hope, the Convention will bring about in the fullness of time, we are particularly indebted to Mr. Sarada Charan Mitra, President of the Committee, who may be truly called the life and soul of the movement. The history of the first Convention of Religions in India is inseparably associated with the name of Mr. Sarada Charan Mitra to whose untiring energy, and hard and unselfish labour, the success of the Convention is chiefly due. It is mainly through his exertions that we see in this hall the noble sight of a vast assembly of delegates representing the various religions of the world, hailing from the remotest corners of India and meeting on a common platform in brotherly love and in spirit of toleration to discuss the problems of religion which affect the vital interests of the whole human race. Mr. Mitter had to work very hard in making a selection out of the vast number of *theses* intended to be read at this assembly ; he had to carry on a voluminous correspondence, and he had to give a good deal of his valuable time in making personal supervision of arrangements for the comfort and convenience of the delegates. On your behalf, gentlemen, and on behalf of all friends and well-wishers of the Convention, I beg to propose a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Sarada Charan Mitter, the esteemed President of the Committee.

Gentlemen, if it is our duty to thank him who has laboured hard to build up this imposing edifice, it is no less our duty to thank those who first conceived the idea of holding a Convention of Religions in India and who helped Mr. Mitter in laying out the plan and in raising the structure as we see it to-day. The idea emanated from that master mind, Swami Vivekananda, whose untimely death is a great loss to the cause of dissemination of ideas of liberal religion in and out of India. The master's idea has been taken up and successfully worked out by the worthy disciples who constitute the Vivekananda Society of Calcutta. By their untiring efforts and unflinching devotion to duty, they have succeeded in enlisting the sympathy and co-operation of the leaders of various religious sects, and of the good and great men of all Communities living in Calcutta. A representative committee was formed with the two secretaries of the Vivekananda Society as Secretaries, and Mr. Sarada Charan Mitra as its President. Their hard and honest labours have borne good fruit. It is our fervent wish that the Vivekananda Society may be maintained, and we appeal to all of you for continued support to make the Convention a permanent Institution in India. Once more let us echo the words of the learned President of the Committee, that this Convention and its successors will help in the removal of causes of discord and animosity, and advance the cause of universal humanity. On your behalf, gentlemen, I beg to propose a hearty vote of thanks to the Vivekananda Society of Calcutta for its earnest endeavours and hard work to make this Convention a reality and a success.

And lastly, Gentlemen, we must not forget the kind and disinterested services of the devoted band of young workers who have helped the Committee in making the arrangements in this Hall and elsewhere as nice and comfortable as possible. They have been unceasing in their attention to the comforts and conveniences of all who attended the meetings of the Convention during the last three days and who have done much to keep order and peace at these meetings. To them, our gratitude is due, and on your behalf, I propose a hearty vote of thanks to these disinterested young workers.

A parting address by Dr. Amrita Lal Bose, a delegate from the Calcutta Geeta Society is given below. It could not be read at the Convention owing to want of time :—

BROTHER SOJOURNERS OF THIS WORLD, whose sole object is to reach that much-wished-for land invisible to

our physical eyes but never absent from our mental vision, I have not the least desire to detain you or to mar the beauty and solemnity of this occasion. For three consecutive days we have met together with all joy and gladness of heart to discuss the question of "What am I and whither shall I go" through the different channels of thought of the human races as it were. Started from different lands we have arrived at this stage of our voyage where we have met together with sympathy and affection and love for all created beings; and whence we will have a new start in consort, singing in different tones and pitches the same song in praise of the Almighty Creator. In this Convention of Religions we see the finger of God, the Prime Mover of this universe. It is but His will that we shall meet together after our childish fight and turmoil to work in harmony for the good of mankind, by imitating the wisdom of that Infinite Mind. It is but natural that nations in their younger days, like boys before the dawn of intellect and seed of knowledge sown into their mind, should be wild and simple. But they should be only showing their perversity and wickedness of nature if they remain so even after attaining knowledge and wisdom.

Evolution is always at work, and it is the will of God that we should always work out our way from the lower to the higher order. People could never be satisfied with their own position. This earthly pleasure could not satisfy their thirst for a purer drink. The pains and sufferings of this world could not be reconciled with the all-merciful nature of the Creator. Thus though infinitely insignificant and finite, men began to fathom the infinity and there is no wonder that with all our imaginations, we are still far far away from that Infinite Mind. All our conceptions are but the partial view of that great Mind and therefore all of them are true. By comparing them and placing them side by side we will obtain a greater view than what one man or one nation could see. Seeing through all the Sacred Books of the human races, both extinct and living, we find the true image of the Infinite Mind and that is सत्यं (*Satyam*) the Truth, from which शिवं (*Sivam*) the Good will emanate and from the Truth and the Good will come सुन्दरं (*Sundaram*), the Beautiful and thus we get the fullest view of the Infinite Mind सत्यं शिवं सुन्दरं (*Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram*). From the first we get the second and from the second, the third. Thus we see the great Truth is the true image of the Infinite Mind. The rival theories whether theological or philosophical, which

tend more or less to separate race from race and man from man, will vanish before "the dawning light of that larger day when we shall exchange repentant greetings with each other like silenced warships, whose commanders after mutual midnight battle, behold at day break flying from every mast-head, when the great sunrise, as it grows, reveals to them the errors of the darkness of night, the same honoured ensign of their common sovereign."

The way to find out the Truth is Knowledge and Time. So let us join in chorus with the bard of the West "Let knowledge grow from more to more" and with the growth of knowledge, the angularities will be rounded off and time will settle down the silt to enable us to have the clearest vision even of the deepest bottom. Thus we see Time and Knowledge are the two factors to give us the true idea of सत्यं शिवं सुन्दरं (*Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram.*)

An English sonnet was next chanted and the assembly separated with the singing of the National Anthem in Hindi by the party of Prof. Bhriguanath Barma, all standing.

Leading features of

ISRAELITISM (Judaism.)

BY

Mr. I. A. ISAAC.

"Have we not all one father.
Hath not one God created us?"

(Mal II. 10)

WORSHIPPERS OF GOD AND LOVERS OF HUMANITY :—

Let us thank the Almighty God for preserving us to witness this grand and glorious day. His mercy extendeth to all time and all space. As the human eye delighteth in light, so should the human soul be ennobled by hearing the tenets of Judaism. "More light" were Goethe's last words. Light that illumines the entire universe may help us to recognise the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man and until and unless this relationship is not recognised, there can be no peace and happiness in the world. As the finite cannot fully comprehend the infinite, the former cannot adequately express his ideas about God and His works. However, His Light extendeth to all time and all space and has left no spot without witness, hence we should be ever ready to seize Truth wherever found, either at home or abroad.

I should not be a Jew if I were not glad to welcome this Convention. From the hills of Palestine and the prophets of Israel went forth the voice of a united humanity. This Convention has brought the scattered and divided children together for the first time in India to fulfil the dream of Akbar. In the words of immortal Einhorn, Jews pray "May the day come when Israel shall be swallowed up by the vast ocean of humanity."

What thinker or theologian would not give his thought to Tennyson's quotation from an inscription on a temple in

Kashmir, "O God ! in every temple I see people that see Thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee."

Now to Judaism, the subject of this afternoon.

The religion of the Hebrews is commonly called Judaism instead of Abrahamism or Mosaism according to its founder, Israelism or Hebrewism, according to its votaries ; because the Greeco-Roman writers had no knowledge of this system of religion prior to the time of the Hebrews Second Commonwealth and then the land was called Judea and its people Judei, and consequently its teachings were called Judaism.

Judaism is not based on mysteries or miracles but it is a rational and self-evident religion. Its doctrines and duties are eminently humane, universal, liberal and progressive and are in perfect harmony with modern science, philosophy, liberty, equality, justice, truth and charity. These are contained in the Bible called in the gentile phraseology, the Old Testament and in the Jewish, the Holy Scriptures. It is written in Hebrew, the language of our ancestors, and is supplemented by Talmud, Mishna, Gaemara and Zohar.

The fundamental and essential principle of Judaism is the belief in One Absolute Being and it has at all times most emphatically protested against any infringement of its pure monotheistic doctrine and affirmed that God is spirit, above all limitations of form, the Absolute Being who calls Himself "I am that I am". The religion is inseparately connected with the Jewish nation as the faithful custodians of Divine moral laws. It has ever remained "A river of God full of living waters" which, while running within the river-bed of a single nation, has continued to feed anew the great streams of human civilisation.

It regards man as a free agent, he has choice between good and evil "Sin lieth at the door, and unto thee shall be its desire, but thou shalt rule over it." (Gen IV. 7.). Moses says in the name of God, "See I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil ; therefore choose life." (Deut XXX 15. 19).

It is the religion of joy, hope and love. It teaches men to recognise in pain and sorrow, dispensations of Divine Goodness and is built on the solid pillar of one God, one law and one humanity. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Lev XIX. 18). "The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you and thou shalt love him

as thyself." (Ibid, 34) "Whatever would hurt thee, do to none, and whatever would benefit thee, do also to others." (Rabbi-Hillel). "Withhold not the benefit from him who claims it, when it is in thy power to do it." (Proverbs III. 27). These teachings constitute the essence of the duties of man to his neighbour. The commandments : viz—to keep a weekly Sabbath, and spend it in devotion to God, to honour parents, not to murder, not to commit lewdness, not to steal, not to hear false witness, not to covet, constitute the social and domestic duties.

The Supreme Being created the Universe and governs it, the life of man is the gift of God and therefore sacred ; the soul is His endowment, a part of His being, therefore divine and immortal ; man's duty on earth is to enfold and ennoble the Godlike within him by engaging the hand and the heart in deeds of love, kindness and charity, and the mind, in the pursuit of knowledge ; all these are the essence of its spiritual teachings. The federation of all people into one brotherhood, under the Fatherhood of one God and under the sway of universal peace, good will and enlightenment, constitute its constant aim and effort.

When the world was in utter darkness, the first message of God to Abraham was, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," (Gen XXII. 18) meaning Abraham to be the source of happiness. And in that message there was this covenant "Walk before Me and be thou perfect." (Gen XXII. 1). God's message to Moses implied Fatherhood of God—"Israel my first born" meaning all nations are God's children. "Whosoever professes belief in the ten commandments is equal to him who professes belief in the whole Torah"—and is entitled to the name of Israel.

Jewish prophets sum religion up in a few words, "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes ; cease to do evil ; learn to do well ; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed ; judge the fatherless ; plead for the widow." (Isaiah). "To act justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly before God." (Micah). On the Tarshish ship the prophet Jonah amidst storm and shipwreck learnt the lesson that the God of Israel is the God of the whole universe and the gentiles have as much claim on the Paternal love as the sons of Israel.

Judaism further teaches that God is Omnipotent, Merciful, Love and Holiness. "Ye shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy." (Lev XIX. 1). "Proclaim liberty throughout all

the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Lev YYV. 10) "Man does not live by bread alone but by His commandments."

Universal peace was in the distant ages preached by the Jewish prophets Isaiah and Micah and so the *Universal Brotherhood* and *Universal Happiness*.

"Have we not all one Father, hath not one God created us?" (Mal 11. 10)

"All shall know God and the whole world be full of His knowledge" and "All nations shall come to God and worship Him."

Socrates's "Know thyself" is simply an echo of Solomon's "Seek wisdom."

Rights of poverty,.....Charity has always been considered as a cardinal virtue by the Jews.

"The poor shall never cease out of the land, therefore, I command thee saying, 'Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor and to thy needy in thy land.'" (Deut XV. 11.)

The lender who received security for a loan to retain the article pledged, is commanded to return it if it was an article of necessity.

"If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down. For that is his only covering, it is his raiment for his skin ; wherein shall he sleep ?" "A widow's raiment might not be taken in pledge, nor might any implement of daily labourer be accepted as a Security." (Deut XXIV. 17), (Deut XXIV. 6). Every fiftieth year, the year of Jubilee, all land that had been sold reverted to the original owner, or his family.

Education. In the Mosaic code ample provision was made for the instruction and particularly, religious instruction of the young and of the ignorant class of people. The Levites were the appointed instructors of the people ; "They shall teach Jacob Thy judgments, and Israel Thy law."

Religious Toleration. -Judaism teaches religious toleration. "Thou shalt not vex a stranger nor oppress him, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Exod XXII. 21)

Even the Egyptians, by whom the Israelites had been so unmercifully treated, were to be requited with charitable forbearance.

"Thou shalt *not* abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a

stranger in his land" (Deut XXIII.7). The law knew no difference between Jew and Gentile.

"If a stranger sojourn with you in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

"One law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you" (Exod XII. 49)

At the revival of Zoroastrianism, the Israelites were living in Babylon (the trading centre between India, China and Phœnicia) which Ernest Renan says, was a principal religious centre of Buddhism and which is also borne out by the fact that Buddha was a Chaldic sage. Thus Judaism had an opportunity of throwing its lustre on the three great religions of the time viz Zoroastrianism, Confucianism and Buddhism.

It is an indisputable fact that Judaism is the mother of Christianity and Islamism. Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew and a disciple of Rabbi Joshua. Whoever has read the Talmud will find out from what source Jesus acquired his learning. We glory in the fact that the followers of both Jesus and Mohammed have inherited all that are good and true in their religions from Judaism.

The books of the New Testament with the exception of one or two are all written by Jews.

In the Europe of Middle Ages, Jews carried the science of Greece to the schools of Bologna, Paris and Oxford. Scholastic philosophy was also influenced by such great mædival Jewish thinkers as Ibn Gebrol and Maimonides while the epoch-making thought of Spinoza, the independent thinker, can be understood only by reference to his Jewish predecessors. Jews supplied materials to the Protestant Reformation. The great philosopher Plato was a disciple of Jeremiah, Zoroaster was a disciple of the prophets, Daniel and Ezeiel. Paul, who played such an important part in the foundation of Christianity, was a disciple of Rabbi Gamliel. In the year 70 of the Christian era Jerusalem was reduced by Titus, the Temple was burnt down and the Jewish kingdom came to an end, but Judaism continued its existence and does so despite the cruel oppression of her many powerful oppressors who have long since disappeared from the stage of history. Driven from her native country, scattered hither and thither, hunted and crushed, still she remains faithful to her past. She has seen tidal waves of Babylon, Assyria,

Persia, Greece, Egypt and Rome and instead of being engulfed by their persecutors have lived to see them engulfed. There is hardly a phase of human thought and activity in which the participation of Jews may not be discerned. As Cosmopolitans they have taken part in the social and intellectual life of almost all civilised nations.

Of all the miracles in the world, the existence of the Jews is one of the greatest. Notwithstanding the terrible and merciless tortures and persecutions of the last 3000 years, Judaism still survives as an ancient religion.

Scattered all over the world, Jews have led science, commerce, art and literature.

There is unfortunately a great deal of misunderstanding regarding the inspiration of the Bible and a few words in explanation of it will not be out of place. We call the Bible a sacred book. Every book that teaches great moral truths, that elevates man, that inspires him with the love of truth, justice, light and wisdom, that, in short, educates his noblest nature is sacred. The Bible contains revelation of God and so does every sacred book that inspires man. All knowledge is a revelation of God. There were and are minds pure and great that receive impressions—so lucid, so convincing, so luminous, so inspiring as to seem supernatural to those around them. Such were the Prophets of the Scriptures. Supernatural too were the mental processes that inspired Phidias to carve the Olympian Jupiter, led Newton to discover the law of gravity, Galileo to discern the path of the earth, Shakespeare to write his dramas, Milton to immortalise his "Paradise Lost", Kalidas to write Shakuntala, Franklin to conduct the fire from the clouds, Lincoln to proclaim the word "Emancipation", Kant to publish his thoughts, Harvey to discover the circulation of blood, Montefiore to make the cause of suffering humanity his own, Edison to make the forces of nature serviceable to man, Father Damian to serve and die amidst afflicted humanity and Marconi to make the atmosphere carry messages at man's biddings.

Now to salvation. The law of Moses commanded Israel to perform God's commands. Isaiah rebukes those in Israel who felt that forms and ceremonies could take the place of justice, mercy and truth. He lashes with whip and scorns those who observed the festivals and yet were iniquitous. He sternly tells the Temple-treaders, the sacrifice-bringers, the holy-day observers, who failed to evidence justice and mercy, "Who seeks these at your hands? your new moons and your

appointed feasts, my soul hateth ; they are a trouble unto me ; I am weary to bear them." Jewish Rabbis without distinction of caste, creed or colour laid down their belief "The righteous of whatever people have a share in the world hereafter", 'not the creed, but the deed, is the cardinal principle" in Judaism. The non-observance of ceremonials and rituals does not affect the fundamental principle of our religion. Virtue is virtue, morality is morality regardless of the heart they abide in. What makes one a good Jew makes another a good Hindu, and a third a good Christian and so on.

Purity is purity, morality is morality, and chastity is chastity with everybody.

Jewish Prayer—The object of Jewish prayer is to help man to become perfect. Its object is not to influence God's will. To the Jew the house of prayer is not the gate to Heaven but the gate to righteousness. It teaches him to be good, moral, pure and holy because God is holy. Jewish prayer inculcates obedience, truth, love to God and man, holiness, gratitude, peace and brotherhood. "For man seeth upon the eyes and God seeth into the heart." "Above all, that is to be guarded, keep thy heart, for out of it comes the issues of life." The characteristic last words of Jewish prayer are : "O God ! We hope that all untruth shall be destroyed, all wickedness disappear and Thy kingdom established, then and then only God shall be king over all the earth, on that day shall there be One Lord and His name shall be One." We take God to be our king, every man His priest, every table an altar, and every meal a sacrifice. "Create unto me a pure heart, O Lord, and renew in me a sincere spirit." "He that despiseth his neighbours is a sinner, but he that is gracious to the poor, happiness will attend him" (Prov, XIV, 21).

Some people imagine there to be only one true religion and all others false. This notion is as absurd as thinking that there is but one route from Calcutta to Bombay or that there is but one method to train a child. Some parents train their children quite differently from others and yet the same results are obtained. Some pilots steer their ship on a course different from that adopted by others and yet they reach the same destination, and some teachers train their pupils differently yet they become equally accomplished. Likewise in religion which is given to man for the government of morals, and virtues. The object of each religion is to make its members good men and good women and every religion can number good men and good women in its fold. If it

were the desire of God that there should be only one religion, His prophets would not have uttered : " All the people shall walk, each in the name of his God (his religion), and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God " (Micah IV, 5).

" From the rising of the Sun until its going down, my name shall be great among the gentiles " (Mol I, 11).

We realise the necessity of variation of forms to meet the requirements of multifarious conditions, temperaments, tastes, minds, climates, civilisations. Religion is simply a matter of education. Far be it from me to argue for uniformity, it would be in contradiction to God's laws and works. We plead for unity and not uniformity. Underlying all forms and ceremonials, there lieth beneath, one Eternal reality, one essential truth, one source of happiness, one infinite love.

It is emphasised by the Prophet Malachi as I read to you just now : Have we not all one Father ; hath not one God created us ? If God is our Father, are we not all brothers ? If we are all brothers are we not responsible to one another for the sacred duty of brotherhood ? With the recognition of this true relationship, all the thoughts that give rise to antipathy, would cease and a sweet fountain of love would flow in every breast.

Let us then resolve to recognise this sacred relationship after centuries of separation and destroy these Chinese walls—hideous barriers which have been raised in utter ignorance, and instead, let us unite in rearing the gorgeous temple of humanity, universal brotherhood, universal republic, love, light and liberty.

JUDAISM. (2nd. Paper).

BY N. E. DAVID ESQR.

It is generally supposed that the creed known as Judaism originated with Moses the Lawgiver. This is an erroneous and misleading notion and is contrary to established facts. 'Judaism' is a coined word of comparatively recent date,—the time of the downfall of the kingdom of Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob.

The most primitive term is 'Ibrim' derived from 'Eber' (great grandson of Shem, Noah's eldest son) who lived long

before Abraham. Eber and his descendants were called Hebrews to distinguish them from the other branches of the Semitic race, (descendants of Shem's other children). Hebrew continued to be the sole appellation until the time of Jacob who was given the title of 'Israel' meaning a spiritual or divine being, one who has become spiritually perfect and obtained life eternal. The prophets of the Old Testament, one and all, speak of the Hebrews as Israelites, including in the term, the tribe of Judah. I therefore propose designating the religion of the descendants of Jacob, Israelitism, as being precise and in harmony with facts.

The fundamental principles of Israelitism may be summed up in the belief of :—

1. The existence of the Eternal Cause, the Self-existing, Immortal, Incorporeal and Unchangeable Infinite Essence, which is the root, the life and the light of all things created, visible and invisible ;
2. Its Unity, Abstract Unity, the embodiment of all things, spiritual, human, animal, vegetable, mineral, etc., that were, are, and shall be ; and
3. Divine Love which is Unbounded, Infinite, and Universal. Its ethics are :—
 1. Pre-existence and immortality of the Soul ;
 2. Universal brotherhood and love ; and
 3. That Virtue brings its own reward and Vice its own punishment, and Salvation is attainable only through our own works and merits.

These cardinal truths are in full accord with God's own unchangeable laws and are in harmony with the voice of the Inner Man in us and tell us in the plainest language that it was by the Self-existing, the Eternal Cause, that the Universe was brought into existence, that it is owing to the Divine Infinite Love, it and everything in it owes its being, and will be supported. It also inculcates that human nature is eternal and immortal as it is a radiation of the Universal Soul and of the same essence ; that all men have spiritually and physically the same origin, and, therefore, one should love his fellow-beings, as his own self, and that salvation can only be obtained through one's own exertions.

The doctrines of the unity and self-existence of the Eternal are axiomatic truths on which the religious theology of every creed, ancient and modern, is founded,

and these are imprinted on almost every page of the Old Testament and other Hebrew sacred books. He alone existed from Eternity and everything in nature, visible and invisible, have emanated from Him. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last ; there was no God before Him, neither shall there be any after Him. He is Almighty, Incorporeal, and Unchangeable. He is the root, the life and the light of everything in existence and without Him none can exist. His love fills the universe and knows no bounds, and His tender mercies are over all His works.

Pre-existence and immortality of the Soul.

The second chapter of Genesis (verse 7) makes mention of a living soul with which man is endowed. The phrase "*Nishmath haiyim*" there, rendered in the English Version "the breath of life," is quite different from and higher than "*Nephesh haiyah*" with which the animal kingdom is animated. This fact alone proves the superiority of man over the animal. Moses further speaks of God as the Lord of all spirits, and Isaiah and Job draw attention to the spirit and the soul of man. Proverbs tell us "the soul of man is the candle (light, spark) of the Eternal." Again, the law promises everlasting life and happiness to those who walk by it, and this implies the existence in man of something other than the destructible body to enjoy them, and this something we call Soul. Man without a soul is a lower animal. Man, as we have seen, possesses a "living soul"—a spark of the Eternal which is necessarily pre-existent and immortal in its nature.

Universal Brotherhood and Love.

The doctrine of the common origin and unity of everything in nature and of mankind in particular is also very clearly set forth and emphasized in the ideal creed of Israelitism. Everything, it tells us, has emanated from the Supreme Being, all human races and families have sprung from one source, and are "the children of one Father" who is "the Lord of the spirits and soul of all flesh." "He is the King over all." "Heaven and earth and all they contain belong to Him." "He hears the prayers of *every one* who calls on Him, and is nigh to *all* who approach Him in truth." In short, all things of which the universe consists, spirit as well as matter have proceeded from Him who is the root, the life and light of all ; in whom they exist move and have

their being, and to whom "everything will one day return." "The universe is not His dwelling-place, but it is *in* and *within* Himself," affirm our sages.

These are the bases and nuclei of universal brotherhood and love and the very foundation and corner-stone of the religious philosophy of Israelitism which insists on every one to love, like Himself, not only his fellow-being but also *the stranger* and to act mercifully, benevolently, and kindly, irrespective of creed, colour or race. "Ye shall walk after the Living One your God" by acting up to His way and will, "which if a man do he shall live by it," obtain life eternal and bliss everlasting, enjoin our sacred books. The Law enforces various kinds of benevolent deeds on every one for the maintenance of the priests and the levites who are consecrated to the service of the Lord and humanity, charitable deeds for the service of the poor—the stranger, the fatherless and the widow ; and gives precedence to the stranger over a Co-religionist where benevolent deeds are concerned to be served first. It also speaks of the stranger as a *brother* (Lev. XXV. 35 &c). "He who hath liberally given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever," "He that hath mercy on the poor honoureth his Maker." "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord." "He who shows mercy to God's creatures is surely of the seed of Abraham our father." "Let thy house be open wide as a refuge, and let the poor of all creeds be cordially received within thy walls." "Cast thy bread upon the *face of the waters*, for thou shalt find it after many days."

Man is also enjoined to deal with an enemy in the same kind manner as he is required to do unto his brother, (Sec. Ex. XXII. 4, 5, etc). Further, "if thine enemy be hungry give him bread to eat ; and if he is thirsty give him water to drink." "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth."

Even the beasts are specially mentioned in this merciful Code. The Sabbaths and Feasts are days of rest not only for ourselves, servants and strangers, but also for our animals. No cruelty is to be shown to animals. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast."..... "No man shall sit down to his meal until seeing that all the animals dependent upon his care have been provided for." The Merciful Father of all showed pity on the Ninevites and their "*much cattle*" and spared Ninevah.

Israelitism is indeed a code of love and goodwill, and its precepts are the very essence of charity and benevolence, tolerance and unity among men. "The Torah (Divine Law)," says the *Talmud*, "begins and ends with loving-kindness" which is one of the pillars upon which the world rests. "By the virtue of three things the world is sustained—the Torah (Divine Law), divine worship, and loving-kindness," and "upon these the salvation of Israel depends." "Real wisdom," our sages tell us, "is to judge liberally, to think purely, and to love fellow-beings."

Salvation.

Salvation means the getting rid of matter and becoming spiritual, and is obtainable only through one's own exertions and merits. Virtue brings its own reward and vice its own punishment. These are truths for all honest minds, and they form the groundwork of the teachings of our faith. They set up the truth that man is a free agent, he has the power, the spirit, in him by which he can become perfect and spiritual and obtain his liberation from this material world of woes and sorrows, if he only exerted himself; and emphatically insisted on good and meritorious deeds. Israelitism knows of no intermediary to carry man's iniquities for him, nor does it recognise an intercessor or a mediator between man and God. "Return unto me, saith the Lord, and I will return unto you." Reform your ways and ye shall be forgiven—your past failings will be overlooked by His fatherly love, and also overlooked and forsaken by your own selves in time. Lead a pure, holy and virtuous life and you shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven—you shall become holy in His holiness. Obey His voice, keep His covenant, and walk in His law, and you shall be "a peculiar treasure unto Him," "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation"—"His chosen people"—yea, "Israel His first-born."

The religious foundation of all creeds is undoubtedly the same. They all tend to the same goal, and the sacred books, of all creeds, contain immortal truths. But whilst almost every creed confines salvation to its adherents, Israel and his creed have for their aim and object the welfare of all mankind, and are impartial and liberal enough to place all the pious and righteous of other creeds on the same level with the pure and godly of their own, and it is incumbent on every one to pray daily for the spiritual progress of *all humanity*.

Israelitism abounds in points of excellent doctrines and noble truths, and its spirit of universality is perfect. "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle and dwell in Thy holy hill ? He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness. He that has a clean hand and a pure heart." "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom." "Blessed is the man whose strength is in the Lord." These are universal terms meaning any one and every one of whatever creed and nationality and do not apply to the Hebrew alone. Again, "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." "Hear this all ye nations, give ear all ye inhabitants of the world....." "Bless the Lord, ye nations....." These preachings are for all the inhabitants of the world, and are met with everywhere in the old Testament. The Hebrew prophets, one and all, preached not only for the Hebrews but also for all nations. Isaiah was called to be "Light to the nations of the earth" and Jeremiah was ordained from his mother's womb to be a prophet unto the nations. Jonah too was commissioned to go to Ninevah and preach repentance to the people who were not Israelites. The Psalms are full of the most earnest and soul-affecting instructions and meditations and preachings for all and every human being, and the teachings of the other prophets are no less so. The book of the proverbs is a treasure of golden sayings and maxims and the book of Ecclesiastes handles the most difficult problems of life that are enigmas to the majority of men.

Israelitism ennobles the spirit of pure unselfishness and devotion and assures us that the nations of the earth will ultimately acknowledge God as the Father of all and worship Him, and that all will see the salvation of the Almighty who alone will be king over them all and that they will all ascend His holy hill, and that many of them will become priests and levites unto the Lord, even the unbelievers and those who denied Him, and his house shall be "the house of prayers for all nations" (Isaiah LVI. 6-7 etc.). The Hebrew sages too, declared that the essence of the Lord is righteousness, that deeds of mercy and benevolence are above the study of the Law and whosoever loves his fellow-being as himself fulfils thereby the teachings of the whole Law. They laid down a maxim no less sublime :—"What is hateful to thee do not do unto others". They further assured us that all the godly and wise (spiritually) of other nations will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. We are not told to pray that other nations may become Jews or that the sinners may perish ; but that *"evil and iniquity be blotted out of the earth, and humanity*

perfected under the Kingdom of the living one and the wicked turn unto Him". "I will teach transgressors Thy way, O Lord, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee", says the sweet Psalmist of Israel (Ps. LI. 13). Said Beruriah, the wife of Rabbi Meir, to her husband when he was once annoyed by certain of his co-religionists turning away from the Lord, "Be mindful of thy faith : pray not that sinners may Perish, but that sin itself may disappear, and no opportunity for its practice remain". Such are the lofty sentiments of the true Israelite.

Our esoteric teachings are equally grand from which one single instance out of many is the following : "there is not a limb nor a member in man's body that has not its corresponding type or affinity in the universe. As man's body is composed of various parts (limbs, joints, muscles, veins, etc.) all fitted up in order, and each renders its service for the mutual preservation and welfare of the component parts of the body ; so everything in nature put together make up one body—one homogeneous whole, the universe. "Man, therefore, should always look upon himself as if the whole world is dependent upon him, and should ever be ready to sacrifice his body, spirit and soul for the good of humanity" ("Zohar" Book I. P. 134b, section Toldoth Ishac ; Book III. P. 29b, section Sao ; Tiquanim. part 1 p 77).

Such is Israelitism, such is its lofty nature, and such are its excellent teachings and ideal conceptions. Its sole aim and object are the unity of all mankind under the banner of the Living One and His Divine Law. It is in truth, life eternal to all who appreciate its doctrines and act up to them. It is adopted to all stages of human progress. It promotes purity of mind and elevation of soul ; raises the dignity and importance of *human individuality* ; gives the strongest hopes for the gradual amelioration and progress of *humanity*, and enables those who abide by it to become holy and spiritual and to conquer death.

What a glorious Kingdom of Heaven is that whose gates are thrown wide open to the flower of humanity, the pure and godly of all nations, to enjoy life eternal and happiness, unalloyed and bliss everlasting ?

We live in the hope that the day will come when the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord and men united by the sacred tie of universal brotherhood and love under one Living God and one Law when no one will need be taught the Divine truth when all implements of war

shall broken and perfect peace reign supreme, "and the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; and the calf and the young lamb and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed ; their young ones shall lie down together ; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy Mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea". (Isaiah Ch. II-6-9).

JUDAISM. (3rd. Paper).

(BY REV.) E. M. COHEN. D.

The Mother of Wisdom Religion or the World.

The fundamental principle of our religion is the belief in the existence, unity, eternity, omnipotence, omnipresence, perfection and infinite wisdom of God. The relation between God and the world is this : God is the Creator of the world, and His providence rules over all. The relation that God bears to man is that He is the loving and just Father of all mankind. Man is the crown of God's creation and consists of a mortal body and an immortal soul. Our chief duty towards God is to love, worship, and serve Him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might. This duty is especially enjoined in *the Shemah* which is as follows :—(Deut. VI. 4-9).—"Hear, O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One," etc. *The Shemah* teaches us the existence, eternity, and unity of our God ; the obligation to love Him above all things, to make every sacrifice for this love, to teach our children at all times the precepts of His law, and to regulate our feelings, thoughts and actions in every station of life in accordance with it. Our chief duty towards mankind is to regard all human beings as our brethren, and to love, and do unto them, as we wish them to love, and do unto, us. Deeds of mercy are those which emanate from a disinterested motive in showing love towards our neighbour. Our duties towards the country in which we live are, loyalty to its Sovereign, respect for its laws, co-operations for the maintenance of its Government, and prayer for its prosperity. Man's duties are, to know himself, to obey the precepts of religion, observe the laws of health and

select a trade or profession whereby to obtain an honourable livelihood. The general rules of religions and moral life with us are to eschew vice and practice virtue ; and the best means to attain such a life are, a strict conformity to the moral law, and submission to that silent voice (the indwelling of which is felt in all men)—Conscience. The sum and substance of our religion and the moral law is contained in those divine precepts known as the Ten Commandments. The first of these directs us to know and acknowledge God to be the only One, Eternal, Omnipotent God and our God and Saviour. The Second enjoins us to refrain from worshipping false gods, from idolatry and false forms of worship, and from giving to anything whatsoever, that worship and glory which are due to the One, true and Omnipresent God alone. The reasons for observing this commandment teach us that the Almighty is zealous for His own worship and in His government of the world He executes justice strictly and bestows good abundantly. The words “of them that hate Me”, in the Second Commandment shew us that the just God will punish the wicked and those who continue in the wickedness of their fathers. By the Third Commandment we are enjoined to use the name of God sincerely and reverently in our worship and in our conversation, and to avoid everything profane or blasphemous in speech, specially false, rash, unjust and unnecessary oaths. And the reason for keeping this Commandment tells us that however the breakers of it may escape punishment from men, yet the Eternal will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgment. By the Fourth we and all that belong to us (after working diligently for six days) are ordered to keep the seventh day of the week holy to God as a Sabbath which, in itself, in Hebrew, *Shabeth*, means rest. The Sabbath day is kept holy by abstaining from our daily pursuits (except those of necessity and mercy), and devoting the day to the worship of God and mental and bodily recreation, as is in harmony with the design of the day. The Sabbath, established for man's spiritual and bodily welfare, is an emblem of the rest and satisfaction of God after He had created the world. The other sacred days (Festivals) we are bound to observe, are :—(a) The Passover (Feast of Spring) to commemorate the departure of our (ancestors from Egypt) ; (b) the Pentecost (offering of First fruits) to commemorate the delivery of the Law at mount Sinai ; (c) the Day of Memorial to celebrate the New year ; (d) the Day of Atonement to be devoted entirely to the worship of God ; and (e) the Feast of Tabernacle, (Har-

vest-tide) to commemorate the residence of our ancestors in booths during their journey through the wilderness. The Fifth Commandment bids us not only to love our parents, but also to honour, respect and obey them, and to be dutiful towards our elders, superiors, equals, and inferiors in all our relations to them, and, for so doing, we are promised long life and prosperity. The Sixth commands us to avoid everything that can injure or destroy life, either in others or ourselves, and to use all lawful endeavours to preserve life. The Seventh bids us be pure, chaste and modest in all our looks, thoughts, words, and actions; the Eighth enjoining, not to desire or take away that which belongs to others, and to be honest and honourable in all our transactions. By the Ninth Commandment we have to refrain from bearing false witness, spreading false rumours, giving rash judgments and backbiting our neighbour, and to be simple and straightforward in speaking and promoting truth. The last Commandment tells us not to indulge envy, or avarice or any feeling but what is just and neighbourly, and to be content with our lot. Usury is forbidden by the Jewish Code. Our hope for the future (Messiah) is, that the time will come, when the true knowledge and worship of the only one God will be spread over the whole world, and all Mankind will glorify their Eternal Father with one heart and one mind and will love one another as true brethren. Then the words of the prophet (Zechariah Ch. VIII., 23) will come to pass "that ten men out of all languages of the nations shall take hold, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you :—for we have heard that God is with you." God selected the Jews to be His chosen people and they are His signpost to the world. Everywhere, wherever the eye may turn, they are to be met with in various walks of life. They have withstood the persecution of ages and been witnesses to the fall and disappearance of peoples and empires. Their mission has been and is to spread the knowledge of God and civilization throughout the face of the earth. Judaism offers to mankind an ideal religion—high ideals of family life and state life. It preaches the brotherhood of all men (not forgetting the stranger), (Lev. Ch. XXV., 35, etc) and the fatherhood of one God. It teaches that salvation is attainable only through one's own deeds and merits, virtue bringing its own reward and vice its own punishment. No intermediary is recognised between man and God. Each person has to be responsible for his own sins. The Israelite is bidden not to wish ill even

to his enemy, and to act with mercy, benevolence, kindness and charity towards his fellow man, no matter what nationality or creed he belongs to. Our faith stands alone in teaching that good men of all nations have a share in heaven. Judaism, unlike other creeds, does not confine salvation to its votaries alone but has for its aim and object the well-being of humanity at large, placing impartially and liberally, the pious and the righteous of other creeds on the same footing with the pure and godly of its own. Judaism makes it obligatory on every one to pray daily for the spiritual progress of the world. Among the Jewish doctrines the immortality of the soul, that imperishable spark from God that enables man to know between right and wrong, looms large. The dispersion of the Jews to the four quarters of the globe had as its object the fulfilment of a double purpose. It was not merely punishment for disobedience to the voice of their God, but a blessing as well, as was promised to Jacob that his seed would inherit the world and in them all the nations of the earth would be blessed, (Gen. Ch. XXVIII. 14). Jewish hygienism is a pattern to the world and the Jewish dietary code stands unequalled for its excellence, and they are now being recognised by eminent authorities of other nations. All our prophets preached to Jews and gentiles alike. Isaiah was "a light to the nations of the earth and Jeremiah, a prophet unto the nations. For the most soul-stirring precepts and meditations for all humanity the Psalms stand extant. How sublime are the preachings of the other prophets ! Solomon's "Proverbs" is a matchless treasure of golden maxims and his "Ecclesiastes" deals with the gravest problems of life that are riddles to the majority of mankind. We do not pray for the conversion of other people to Judaism nor that sinners may perish, but that the wicked turn unto God and evil and iniquity be wiped off the earth and all mankind perfected under the kingdom of the Living One of Israel. The Bible is life eternal to all who understand and appreciate its teachings and act up to them. It is God's Law which is, like Himself, immutable and is well adapted for all stages of human progress, and enables the good and the wise who dwell by it to become holy and spiritual. Israel's Kingdom of Heaven has its gate flung wide open to the flower of humanity—the pure and godly of all creeds to enjoy undreamt-of happiness, life eternal, and bliss everlasting. Real wisdom is to think purely, judge liberally, and love fellow-beings. Judaism is indeed a magnanimous code of love and good-will, and its precepts are the very essence

of charity and benevolence, tolerance, equality and liberty. It breathes out loving-kindness at every turn, this is one of the pillars upon which the world stands.

The General Tendency of Holy Writ.

We can comprehend the general tendency of Holy Writ in a few words ; namely, "Love God above everything and your neighbour as yourself." "Do not do unto others what is hateful unto thee." Our love towards God will be aroused by taking into consideration in the first place, that He alone is perfect and infinite love, who likes to make all creatures happy. Secondly. That He is the Father of us all, and our greatest benefactor. By doing everything that is pleasing to God, and carefully shunning that which displeases Him, do we best display our love towards God. The holy Bible shows what pleases or displeases Him, and in many cases our own judgment can serve us as a guide. We evince more proofs of our love for God ;—

- (a) By always thinking of Him.
- (b) By directing our prayers to Him. with our whole heart.
- (c) By endeavouring to imitate Him as much as possible in love and in justice ; and lastly
- (d) By allowing neither enjoyment nor material interest to tempt us to forsake our holy belief or to transgress the Commandments of the Lord. Love towards God must incite us to love our fellow-creatures, and to offer them a helpful hand whenever it is required.

The universal Creed, which, it is evident, is Jewish, enjoins us to believe :

1. In God, the One and Indivisible, Infinite, and Eternal, the Cause of all potential forces, the Creator and Lawgiver of the world, the All-merciful Father of the whole human race, the Ideal of all perfections, the source and index of all happiness ; containing, but not contained by, the universe ; the essence of love, but void of passion ; a person, but not a substance ; approachable, but not attainable ; omnipresent, but immiscible ; omnipotent, but not arbitrary.

2. (a) In the law of God, namely in the expression of His perfect will in the human heart ; the subject of revelation to God-inspired individuals (prophets).

(b). That it is the object of this law to teach man

obedience to God, to bring the free will of man into subjection to, and mould it into conformity with, the will of God, and to make man God-like.

(c). That this law is the judge of man, rewarding his obedience by bringing him nearer to God (happiness), and punishing him by taking him further away from God (unhappiness) and that no power in heaven or on earth can prevent such a consequence.

3. That the law of God is Love.

4. (a) In the conscious continuance of man's personal spirit (and in the absorption by nature of his impersonal body) after death ; in the progressive development of the human spirit through numberless existences, and endless ages, evermore improving in all perfection and knowledge, evermore advancing towards God through all eternity.

(b) In the decree of God, that all men shall be saved, that not one shall be lost ; that the boundless dominions of God are peopled by an infinite number and variety of intelligent beings whom God, the Father of all, educates after His own likeness. There is no desert in the realms of the universe ; there is no rebel in God's kingdom.

(c) That everywhere there is life, and that all life tends God-ward.

5. (a) In the unity of the whole human race ; the obligation of concord, notwithstanding diverging opinions of whatever nature ; and in the necessity of individual freedom.

(b) That the enforcement of peculiar creeds, *inter alia*, is injurious to humanity, because it hinders the spontaneous development of the individual, and must lead to spiritual sloth and indifference.

6. (a) In prayer ; consisting in praise of God for all we receive, in the expression of our perfect trust in his providence, in the contemplation of his perfections, which we shall apprehend according to the degree of the perseverance with which we exercise ourselves in prayer ; and in studying the good and perfect will of God.

(b) That prayer is obligatory and necessary for our spiritual welfare and progress ; and that without it we shall become animalized and withdraw from God, whose presence is joy and pleasure and happiness to all his creatures.

We have thirteen fundamental articles of faith and they form the foundation of the decree of God and His Law :—

The Jewish Articles of Faith.

1st. We believe with a perfect faith that God exists. By God we understand a Being who is truly perfect in all respects, and who is the origin of all other beings, *i.e.*, that God alone has created the Universe, the heaven, and the earth, out of nothing ; God has not left the earth to itself after creating it, for He maintains and governs everything created. "The Eternal reigneth for ever and ever" (Ex. XV, 18).

2nd. The tenor of the second creed is that God is one and indivisible. "Hear, O Israel, the Eternal our God, the Eternal is *One*." By *One* is meant that God is a Being, without any other being, like Himself, either in heaven or on the earth, and that no God exists besides Him. "See now that I, I am He and there is no God with Me." (Deut. XXXII., 39). By "God is indivisible," we signify that He is not composed of parts, but is a perfect unity, and no other unity can therefore be made equal to Him, and that He neither in Himself nor in His attributes is susceptible either of increase or decrease ; "I am the same Who will be" (Exod. III. 14).

3rd. The third creed is that God is not a body, and has neither form nor corporeal qualities. From this follows that we must not represent God to ourselves in any kind of form or figure whatever. The deduction from this, is that God is not limited like bodies, nor enclosed in one space. The Supreme Being is everywhere, God is omnipresent. "Do I not fill heaven and earth, saith the Eternal." (Jeremiah XXIII, 24).

4th. The doctrine of the fourth creed is that God always existed before any being was, and that He always would exist, if everything were to pass away. Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts ; "I am the first, and I am the last ; and there is no God beside me." (Isaiah, XLIV., 6).

5th. The fifth creed teaches the providence of the Creator. By this is implied, 1st, that God alone regulates the Universe, and provides for all the wants of His creatures. 2nd. That God observes the actions, words and thoughts of all the inhabitants of the world. "From the place of His residence, He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth, He fashioneth all their hearts, and understandeth all their works." (PIS. 33, 14 & 15).

6th. The sixth creed treats of Prophecy—That God has made known His will in earlier times to particular men,

in a manner supernatural and unknown to us. "Surely, the Lord God will do nothing (important) before He hath revealed His secret unto His servants the Prophets," (Amos III, 7). Those men gained distinction by their extraordinary intellectual faculties, excellent knowledge, pure fear of God and disinterested philanthropy. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him and He will make known His covenant unto them. (Pis. XXV.—14).

7th. According to the seventh creed Moses is the greatest and the most eminent Prophet who ever has existed, or ever will exist. "There arose not a prophet again in Israel like unto Moses, to whom the Lord revealed Himself face to face". (Deut. XXXIV, 10). Moses excelled all other prophets principally: 1st. In his clearer conception of the aim of the creation, the destination of the creatures, and the Divine administration of the world, as God testified of him; "In all My house (the creation) he is the faithful one" (Num XII. 7). 2nd. In his self-denial and modesty. "The man Moses was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth." (Num. XII. 3). 3rd. And lastly, in that God revealed His will to him without any meditation. "From mouth to mouth I speak to him even apparently, and not in dark speeches." (Num XII. 8). In the choice of Moses as the Redeemer of Israel from bondage, and as messenger at the giving of the Law, did God show his particular love to this prophet. At Mount Sinai, when all the people were ranged round, God appeared in His majesty and spoke the *Ten Commandments* in the ears of all Israel. (Ex. XIX-20 & 24.) (Deut. V. 5). This revelation was necessary in order to convince Israel of the truth of the prophecy in general, and of the mission of Moses in particular.

8th. The tenor of the eighth creed is that we still genuinely possess the Holy Law, given to us of yore on Mount Sinai, and it was written by Moses and handed down to Israel. We also still possess the oral Law and this is contained in the work "Mishna" and the Talmud or the "Gemara"

9th. The ninth creed is that the Holy Law will always remain unchangeable, and therefore will never be supplanted nor modified by another one. "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, but with those that stand here with us this day before the Lord our God, and with those that stand not here with us this day". (Duet. XXIX. 13-14.) The consequence of that is, that we must follow up all laws and commandments contained in the Torah, accor-

ding to the explanation of the tradition, and that we have no right either to add or to take away anything arbitrarily. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it". (Deut. IV, 20.)

10th. The tenor of the tenth creed is that God is Omniscient. He knows all events and changes which have occurred since the creation, which happen now, and which ever will arise, and also the thoughts of all human beings are known to God. Thus, we deduce that God is immoveable in his resolutions. For since the origin and consequence of all matters are known to God, no circumstances can arise, which could move Him to change His resolutions. "I will not profane my covenant, nor alter that which has gone forth from My lips" (Pis. ch. 89. 55 verse). The consequence is that all assurances and promises which God had made known to Israel must be fulfilled. There are no instances in which God altered His resolutions.

11th. By the eleventh creed we believe that God rewards all good actions and punishes the evil. "I, the Eternal, search the heart and try the reins to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings". (Jerem. XVII, 10).

12th. The doctrine of the twelfth creed is the coming of the Messiah. We believe that Israel will not always remain scattered over the earth ; but, that God will bring them out of their exile. God will, at some period, send a descendant from King David who will gather together the Israelites, and will lead them back to the Holy Land, the hereditary portion of their fathers, and will re-establish them as an independent nation. "And the Eternal Thy god will bring thee back out of thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will again gather thee from all the nations, whither the Eternal thy God hath scattered thee". (Deut. XXX, 3). His sublime calling will chiefly be to bring all nations to the conviction and the acknowledgment of the unity of God, to elevate Israel to the summit of power and respect, and to establish brotherly concord and eternal peace among all the nations. Then God will cause Jerusalem to be re-built, will re-establish the Holy Temple in a splendour never before seen, in which all the inhabitants of the earth shall pray and worship ; and then Israel will be a happy and wise nation entirely dedicated to the service of God. "At that time I will bring you again, and at that time I will assemble you ; for I will appoint you for a name, and a praise among all the

people of the earth, when you see that I bring back your captivity ; Thus saith the Eternal." (Zeph. III-20). "And the Eternal shall be King over all the earth, on that day the Eternal shall be *One* and His name *One*". (Zech. XIV,-9).

13th. The thirteenth creed teaches the resurrection of the dead. God will raise the dead out of their graves in the end of time, and revive them in a more perfect state. The effect caused by that is that those also who died long ago, will partake of the enjoyment of the eminent restoration of Israel. God will then pass judgment upon all the human race, and will reward each according to his merits or adjudge punishment. The manner how, and the period when, are known to God only. "I kill and I make alive". (Deut. XXXII -39). "The Eternal killeth, and maketh alive, He bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up". (I Sam. II-6).

Our creed, summed up shortly is :—

1. Extolled be the living God, and praised be He ; He existeth, but His existence is not bounded by time.
2. He is *One*, but there is no unity like unto His unity ; He is incomprehensible, and also His unity is unending.
3. He hath no material form, He is incorporeal, and we cannot compare His holiness to aught that is.
4. He existed before all things that are created ; He is the first, but there is no beginning to His existence.
5. Behold, He is the Lord of the world ; and through all the creation, evinceth His mighty power and dominion.
6. The inspiration of His prophecy did He bestow on the men of His peculiar and glorious people.
7. There never arose a prophet in Israel like unto Moses who beheld God's similitude.
8. A true Law hath God given to His people, by the hand of His prophet, who was faithful in His house.
9. God will never alter nor change His Law for any other.
10. He beholdeth and knoweth all our secrets ; for He vieweth the end of a thing at its commencement.
11. He rewardeth the pious man according to his works ; and punisheth the wicked, according to his wickedness.
12. At the end of days will He send our annointed, to redeem those who hope for the accomplishment of their salvation.
13. God in His great mercy will revive the dead.

Blessed be His glorious name, praised for evermore !

ZOROASTRIANISM.

BY

Mr. JIVANJI JAMSHEDJI MODI, B. A.

A Zoroastrian Creed.—Its Theology.

[In compliance with the kind suggestions of the Hon'ble Chairman of the Convention Committee, Chapters I, II and III dealing with the subject have been omitted. Chapter I is an introductory note, dealing with the ancient Persians and their efforts in the West and in the East. Chapter II deals with the Indo-Iranian religion, its two principal notions with a few details of the common elements and the common names of Divine Beings etc. Chapter III deals with the history of the Schism which separated them from the main stock, giving in it the historical tone of the *Gathas*, the old and the new elements in Zoroastrianism &c.*

THE ancient Persians are spoken of as the Puritans of the Old World. They at one time lived in a common land with the ancestors of the ancient Hindus and worshipped a common god, the God of the Indo-Iranian religion. They then separated, the cause of separation being their Puritanic tendencies, their efforts to purify religious notions. Then there came in a time when the Indo-Iranians began to part in the matter of their progress of thought. The ancestors of the ancient Iranians saw that among a section of their brethren, the two notions *viz* (1) the latent monotheism and (2) the unconscious dualism slowly began to disappear. They themselves on the other hand developed them or as Darmesteter says "pushed them to an extreme."

The twelfth chapter of the *Vaṇa* contains the Articles of Faith of an ancient Iranian. It is what Dr. Mills calls "The Mazdayasnian Confession". The contents of the chapter can be conveniently divided into the following six heads:

1. A declaration to break the influence or the action of the *Daēvas* and his firm belief in *Ahura Mazda* as the source of all things.
2. A declaration to stand by the side of his co-religionists and to do all that is necessary to protect them from harm and to help them.

*The Vivekananda Society.

3. A declaration in detail of his hatred of all that is evil and that proceeds from the Daêvas and of his resolve to follow the teachings of Zoroaster in this matter.

4. A declaration of his line of conduct in life. He enumerates some of the best creations of God and announces his resolve to be as useful to others as these creatures are. He declares his willingness to act as Zoroaster and his first disciples acted and to hold God himself as his ideal before him.

5. A declaration in favour of the triad of good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

6. The final declaration announcing himself, as said above, as a Mazdayaṇian Zoroastrian.

The substance of this chapter of the different kinds of declarations can be summarised thus :

"I am opposed to the path of the Daêvas and am a follower of the path of Ahura Mazda. I praise the Amesha Spentas. I take Ahura Mazda to be the Creator of all good things. I praise wisdom. May it come to me. I will protect the cattle from rapine proceeding from thieves and robbers and I will protect the quarters of the Mazdayaṇians from all sorts of harm. I will see that all Mazdayaṇians live in peace and security according to their pleasure. I will do no harm to the Mazdayaṇians even if my life is in risk. I hate the evil Daêvas and I will never be in their company. Water, vegetation and cattle are useful to all around us. I will have them as my models and try to be useful like them to all round me. I will have Ahura Mazdā Himself and then Zoroaster and Farshaoster and Jamasp as my ideals before me. I will always practise good thoughts, good words and good deeds. I will praise the Mazdayaṇian Zoroāstrian religion which grants peace and devotion.

The first and the last parts of this essay are very important. In the last part the reciter declares his adherence to the faith. It is the portion which a modern Zoroastrian recites several times during the day when he unties and puts on again his *Kusti* or sacred thread. It runs thus :

"I am a Mazdayaṇian, a Zoroastrian Mazdayaṇian. I agree to be a praiser and a believer (of the Zoroastrian Mazdayaṇian religion). I praise good thoughts, I praise good words, I praise good actions. I praise the good

Mazdayaṇian religion which removes quarrels, which makes one lay down arms, which inspires self devotion and which is righteous. Among all the religions that exist now or may hereafter exist, the greatest, the best and the most excellent is that which is the Ahuramazdian Zoroastrian (religion). I believe that all good proceeds from Ahura Mazda. This is the praise of the Mazdayaṇian religion."

The Chapter of Creed begins with a statement renouncing the first renouncing the Daêva worship. It runs thus :—"I drive Daêva-yaṇa religion. the Daêvas hence ; I confess as a Mazda-worshipper of the order of Zarathushtra, estranged from the Daêvas, devoted to the lore of the Lord, a praiser of the Bountiful Immortals ; and to Ahura Mazda, the good and endowed with good possessions, I attribute all things good, to the holy One, the resplendent, to the glorious, whose are all things whatsoever which are good ; whose is the Kine, whose is Asha (the righteous order pervading all things pure), whose are the stars, in whose lights the glorious beings and objects are clothed."¹

We see here that the ancient creed began with words which dissociated an ancient Iranian from the Daêva worship prevalent round about him and associated him with the Mazda worship then beginning to take a deeper root. Even a modern Parsee emphatically calls himself a Mazdayaṇian, a Zoroastrian Mazdayaṇiân, *i. e.* a person who worship Mazda, the all-knowing God according to the way taught by Zoroaster. He expresses himself as opposed to Daêva-yaṇa *i. e.* the worship of the Daêvas. This emphatic declaration is due to the schism above referred to, whereby the ancient Iranians parted from the sister branch or branches of the Indo Iranian stock. It is due to the fact that the other branch or branches began to lose sight of the original two notions of the common Indo Iranian religion, viz, the latent monotheism and the unconscious dualism.

We now come to the question of the Daêvas. Who were the Daêvas to whom the ancient Iranians expressed and the modern Parsis express themselves as opposed ? The word Daêva latterly had a very larger signification.

Daêva is a very ancient Aryan word for God—being derived from an ancient Aryan root *div* to shine. Not only the

¹ Dr. Mills : S. B. E. Vol. XXXI, pp. 247-48.

Eastern Aryans, the Hindus, but the Western Aryans also, have the word in one form or another for their God. For example, the Greeks had Deos or Zeus ; the Romans, Deus ; the Germans, Tens ; the Luthanians, Diewas. But it appears that among other Aryans, the word degenerated from its primitive purity, when, instead of believing that there was only one Daêva or God who was the Cause of all causes, they began to entertain a polytheistic belief, the word lost its primitive meaning. The word, instead of being restricted and used for God alone, began to be used for more gods than one. When the early Iranians saw the spread of this belief they stamped the word as unfit for the name of God. Among them the word came to designate the many gods of their other Aryan brethren.

So the ancient Iranians understood, by the word Daêva, the numerous gods of other sections of the older stock.

Thus the word Daêva, once dethroned from its higher pedestal, began to have, later on, wider and a larger signification. It included in its signification all persons, powers, causes or forces that had an evil tendency, that led to do harm to the creation. Thus there were the Daêvas of the following several classes :

1. The gods, other than the one Omniscient Lord Ahura Mazda, who usurped the place and dignity of Ahura Mazda.
2. Tyrants or evil disposed persons of the worst type. For example, the tyrant Azidahaka or Zohak, who usurped the throne of Persia, is spoken of in the Avesta as a Daêva.¹
3. The causes or the things that brought about sickness and spread diseases were also known as Daêvas. The Ardi-behesht Yasht and the Vendidad contain a long list of different kinds of sickness and disease known as the Daêvas.
4. Moral vices were also known as Daêvas.

A Mazdayaçnian Zoroastrian prayed to oppose the work and influence of all these Daêvas :

Dr. Hang thus speaks of the general subject of Ahura and the Daêvas :

"In the Vedas, as well as in the older portions of the Zend-Avesta (see the Gathas), there are sufficient traces to be discovered that the Zoroastrian religion arose out of a vital struggle against the form which the Brahmanical religion had

assumed at a certain early period. Both creeds are known as diametrically opposed to one another in both their scriptures. One is called the belief of the Asuras (*Ahura* in the Avesta), the other that of the Devas. This circumstance cannot be merely accidental, the less so, as we find the word *Asura* used in the older Vedic hymns in a perfectly good sense, and as a name of several Devas themselves, which fact clearly shows that there must have been once a vital struggle between the professors of the Deva and those of the Ahura religion, in consequence of which the originally good meaning of *Asura* was changed to a bad one."¹

We have so far seen how the ancient Iranians who
The Zoroastrian conception of God. at one time believed in the common God, the Daêva of their Indo-Iranian brethren, separated from their other brethren and how they enthroned Ahura Mazda in the place of the Indo-Iranian Daêva when the latent monotheism and the unconscious dualism connected with Daêva began gradually to disappear. We will see here what the Iranian conception of the Iranian Ahura Mazda was, and is now, as preserved in the Avesta.

God is spoken of as Ahura, Mazda or Ahura Mazda. He is known as Ahura *i. e.* the Lord of Existence, because He is Eternal. He has existed from times eternal and will exist for times eternal. He is not only self-existent but is the bestower of existence upon all things seen in the world. Though unseen, He is recognizable in His created world. The sun, the moon, the stars manifest His existence. The regular way in which these heavenly bodies move and work testifies a master mind. The air we breathe, the phenomena of the movements of water, the growth of vegetation, the constitution of animals and men, the regularity, the system, the order seen in the growth of all these, demonstrate His master mind and His power. From Nature our thoughts go to Nature's God. His grand Nature proves His existence.

The other name of God is Mazda, *i. e.*, the Great Knower, the Omniscient Lord. He is so called because He rules the world by His infinite knowledge. It is by His infinite knowledge that He has created the Universe and has set it a-going.

1. Hang's Essays (2nd Edition), p. 287.

A Zoroastrian's Creed.—Its Speculative Philosophy.

We have so far spoken of Zoroastrian Monotheism which was the first of the two notions that Speculative Dualism. were common to the old Indo-Iranian people and which the ancient Iranians developed. Now we come to the second notion, *viz.*, the unconscious dualism. We will see how the ancient Iranians developed that notion, when their brethren, the ancient Indians allowed it to gradually disappear. While the consideration of the first notion appertains to the domain of theology strictly so called, the consideration of this notion belongs to what may be called the speculative philosophy of the Zoroastrian religion.

Ahura Mazda or God, is according to Parsee Scriptures, The speculative philosophy about the Creator. the Cause of all causes. He is the Creator, as well as the Destroyer, the Increaser as well as the Decreaser. He gives birth to different creatures and it is He who brings about their end. How is it, then, that He brings about these two contrary results? In the words of Dr. Hang, "Having arrived at the grand idea of the unity and indivisibility of the Supreme Being, he undertook to solve the great problem which has engaged the attention of so many wise men of antiquity, and even of modern times, *viz.*, how are the imperfections discoverable in the world, the various kinds of evils, wickedness, and baseness, compatible with the goodness, holiness and justice of God? This great thinker of remote antiquity solved this difficult question *philosophically* by the supposition of two primeval causes, which, though different, were united, and produced the world of material things, as well as that of the spirit."¹

'These two primeval causes or principles are called in the Avesta the two "Mainyus." This word comes from the ancient Aryan root "man" to think. It may be properly rendered into English by the word 'spirit' meaning 'that which can only be conceived by the mind but not felt by the senses.' Of these two spirits or primeval causes or principles, one is Creative and the other Destructive. The former is known in the Avesta by the name of 'Spentamainyush' or the Increasing Spirit, and the latter by that of 'Angra-mainyush' or the Decreasing Spirit. These two spirits work under one God, Mazda, who, through the agency, as it were, of the two spirits, is the Cause of all causes in the universe, the Creator

1. Hang's Essays (2nd edition) p. 303.

as well as the Destroyer. These two spirits work under the Almighty day and night. They create and destroy, and this they have done ever since the world was created.¹

It is in this 'dualistic conception of creation' that, as Countess Cesoresco says, "the true originality of Zoroastrianism as a religious system lies." It is "the nexus that connects all its parts."² We will not enter here into the details as to how it connects all its parts.³

The above philosophical notions which distinguished Zoroastrianism from other religions then extant, have led some to misunderstand Zoroastrian theology. But scholars like Hang, West, Mills and others have ably spoken against the faulty opinion of some, that Zoroaster preached dualism. As Mr. Samuel Laing has said, "To this sublime view, the best modern thought is fast approximating. Men of science like Huxley, philosophers like Herbert Spencer, poets like Tennyson, might all subscribe to it ; and even enlightened Christian divines, like Dr. Temple, are not very far from it when they admit the idea of a Creator behind the atoms and energies, whose original impress, given in the form of laws of nature, was so perfect as to require no secondary interference"⁴

A Zoroastrian's Creed.—Its Moral System.

The consideration of the question of the Speculative Zoroastrian Moral system, Philosophy of Zoroastrianism brings us to the question of its moral principles.

In the 12th chapter of the Yaçna, a Zoroastrian thus pithily announces his views about morality : "I praise good thoughts, I praise good words, I praise good actions."

Prof. Harelez says :—"La religion mazdéenne se distingue de toutes les autres religions antiques en ce qu'elle a une morale systématisée et fondée sur des principes philosophiques." Let us see how the moral system of Zoroastrianism has been founded on philosophic principles.

As there are two primeval principles under Ahura Mazda that produce our material world, as said above, so there are two principles which, in the nature of man, encourage him to

1. Vide my Religious system of the Parsees (2nd ed. 1903), p.p. 7-9.
2. The Contemporary Review, October, 1907, p. 495.
3. Vide my 'Religious system of the Parsees for some of the details.
4. "A Modern Zoroastrian" by Samuel Laing (1887) p.p. 203-4.

do good or tempt him to do evil. One asks him to support the cause of the Good Principle, the other to follow that of the Evil Principle. The first is known by the name of Vohumana or Beheman, *i. e.*, the good mind. The second is known by the name of Akamana *i. e.* the bad mind.

These two principles exert their influence upon a man's *manashni*, *gavashni* and *kunashni*, *i. e.*, upon a man's thoughts, words and deeds. When the influence of Vohumana predominates, his thoughts, words and deeds result in *humata* (good thoughts), *hukhta* (good words) and *hvarshata* (good actions). But when the influence of Akamana predominates, his thoughts, words and deeds result in *dushmata* (evil thoughts), *dusukhta* (evil words) and *dusvarshata* (evil actions).

The fifth chapter of the Vendidad gives, as it were, a short definition of what is morality or purity. There it is said that, "*Yaosdâo mashyâi aipi santhem vahishtâ*," *i. e.*, "Purity is the best thing for man after birth." This, we may say, is the motto of the Zoroastrian religion. The writer then further says that 'the preservation of good thoughts, good words and good deeds is piety.' In these three pithy words *humata*, *hukhta*, *hvarshata* (good thoughts, good words, good actions) is summed up, so to say, the whole of the moral philosophy of the Zoroastrian scriptures. Your good thoughts, your good words and your good actions will be your intercessors. They are your saviours. Nothing more is wanted. As the late Dr. Hang rightly observed "The moral philosophy of Zoroaster was moving in the triad of 'thought, word and deed.' These three words form, as it were, the pivot upon which the moral structure of Zoroastrianism turns. It is the ground work upon which the whole edifice of Zoroastrian morality rests."¹

The moral system based on the philosophic principle of dualistic conception does not, in the words of Countess Martinengo Cesaresco "make a single demand on human nature except to be good as its Creator was good."²

Puritanic Influence in Customs, Ceremonies &c.

The ancient Aryans had animal sacrifices to some extent. Purity in Sacrifices. Zoroastrianism did away with that practice. The early Mazdayasnians seemed to have used flesh as their offerings, instead of offering

1. Vide my 'Religious System of the Parsees,' p.p. 15-18.

2. The Contemporary Review. November 1907, p. 496.

whole animals as sacrifice. Latterly even that had been done away with. The modern Parsees have only milk as a relic of the ancient Aryans' animal sacrifices. Fruits and flowers form the principal things that are produced before the worshippers in their liturgic prayers. All these things are held and presented as symbols of the animal and vegetable productions of the Creator. Fire stands before them as the emblem of God's refulgence and purity.

The puritanic spirit of the Zoroastrians has been observed in various directions in connection with some of their religious customs and observances, for example, in matters like the following :

1. Religious sacrificial observance.
2. The symbolic objects of Worship.
3. The custom of the Disposal of the Dead.

The Zoroastrians regard fire as an emblem of refulgence, as the most perfect symbol of God and as the best and noblest representative of His divinity. "In the eyes of a Parsee, his the fire's) brightness, activity, purity and incorruptibility bear the most perfect resemblance to the nature and perfection of the Diety."

Again, one must remember, that it is the several symbolic ceremonies that add to the reverence entertained by a Parsee for the fire burning in his fire temples. A new element of purity is added to the fire burning in the fire-temples of the Parsees by the religious ceremonies accompanied with prayers that are performed over it, before it is installed in its place on a vase on an exalted stand in a chamber set apart.

The sacred fire burning there, is not the ordinary fire burning in our hearths. It has undergone several ceremonies, and it is these ceremonies, full of meaning, that render the fire more sacred in the eyes of a Parsee. We will briefly recount the process here. In establishing a fire-temple, fires from various places of manufacture are brought and kept in different vases. Great efforts are also made to obtain fire caused by lightning. Over one of these fires a perforated metallic flat tray with a handle attached is held. On this tray are placed small chips and dust of fragrant sandalwood. These chips and dust are ignited by the heat of the fire below, care being taken that the perforated tray does not

touch the fire. Thus a new fire is created out of the first fire. Then from this new fire another one is created by the same process. From this new fire another is again produced, and so on, until the process is repeated nine times. The fire thus prepared after the ninth process is considered pure. The fires brought from other places of manufacture are treated in a similar manner. These purified fires are all collected together upon a large vase, which is then put in its proper place in a separate chamber.

Now what does a fire so prepared signify to a Parsee? He thinks to himself: When this fire on this vase before me, though pure in itself, though the noblest of the creations of God, and though the best symbol of the Divinity, had to undergo certain processes of purification, had to draw out, as it were, its essence—nay, its quintessence—of purity, to enable itself to be worthy of occupying this exalted position, how much more necessary, more essential, and more important it is for me—a poor mortal who is liable to commit sins and crimes, and who comes into contact with hundreds of evils, both physical and mental—to undergo the process of purity and piety, by making my *manashni*, *gavashni* and *kunashni* (thoughts, words and actions) pass as it were through a sieve of piety and purity, virtue and morality, and to separate by that means my *humata*, *hukhta* and *hvarshata* (good thoughts, good words and good actions) from *dushmata*, *dusukhta* and *dusvarshata* (bad thoughts, bad words and bad actions), so that I may, in my turn, be enabled to acquire an exalted position in the next world.'

Again the fires put together as above are collected from the houses of men of different grades in society. This reminds a Parsee that, as all these fires from the houses of men of different grades, have, by the process of purification, equally acquired the exalted place in the vase, so before God, all men—no matter to what grades of society they belong—are equal, provided they pass through the process of purification, *i. e.*, provided they preserve purity of thoughts, purity of words, and purity of deeds.

Again, when a Parsee goes before the sacred fire, which is kept all day and night burning in the fire-temple, the officiating priest presents before him the ashes of a part of the consumed fire. The Parsee applies it to his forehead just as the Christian applies the consecrated water in his church and thinks to himself: 'Dust to dust. The fire, all brilliant, shining, and resplendent, has spread the fragrance of the

sweet-smelling sandal and frankincense round about, but is at last reduced to dust. So it is destined for me. After all I am to be reduced to dust and have to depart from this transient life. Let me do my best to spread, like this fire, before my death, the fragrance of charity and good deeds and lead the light of righteousness and knowledge before others.'

In short the sacred fire burning in a fire-temple serves as a perpetual monitor to a Parsee standing before it to preserve piety, purity, humility and brotherhood.

Now, though a Parsee's reverence for fire, as the emblem of God's refulgence, glory, and light, as the visible form of all heat and light in the Universe, in fact as the visible form of all energy, and as a perpetual monitor, encouraging ennobling thoughts of virtue, has necessitated the erection of fire-temples as places of worship, he is not restricted to any particular place for his prayers. He need not wait for a priest or a place to say his prayers.

Nature in all its grandeur is his temple of worship. The glorious Sun and the resplendent Moon, the mountains towering high into the heavens and the rivers fertilizing the soil, the extensive seas that disappear, as it were, into the infinity of space, and the high vault of heaven, all these grand objects and phenomena of nature draw forth from his soul, admiration and praise for the Great Architect, who is their author.

The use of Fire as a symbol of God's Divinity, Purity, &c. kept a Zoroastrian away from the very beginning from the use of any image or idol. We have the authority of Herodotus (BK. I, 131) to say that the ancient Iranians' conception of God was even higher than that of the ancient Greeks. He says that they had no gods with human forms as among the Greeks and that they had no statues or images.

Most of the ancient Aryans burned their dead. The
 The Disposal of the Dead. Iranians did away with burial and resorted to the custom of the exposure of the bodies on the tops of mountains where the flesh can be devoured by the flesh-eating vulture and the rest dried by the sun and air. They did not take to the custom of burning, from their point of view of veneration for Fire.

Their aversion to burial must be due to sanitary views which suggested that the earth may not be polluted. This is clearly indicated in the Vendidad.

Another probable reason suggested by Countess E. Martinango Cesoresco is worth noticing here.¹ At first she thus justifies the Parsee custom of the disposal of the dead. Speaking of the innovations of Zoroaster whose "paramount object," she thinks, "was less change than conservation", she says : "The most remarkable innovation was that which concerned the disposal of the dead. It cannot be explained as a relic of barbarism : it was introduced with deliberation and with the knowledge that it would shock human sensibility then, just as much as it does now. The avowed reason for giving the dead to vultures or animals is that burial defiles the earth.....Though so strongly insisted on in the Avesta, the practice only became general at a late period : even after Mazdaism had made headway, bodies were often enveloped in wax to avoid defilement of the earth while evading the prescribed rite. Cremation, the natural alternative to burial, would have polluted the sacred fire. It was observed, no doubt, that the consumption of the dead by living animals was the means employed by nature for disposing of the dead. Why do we so rarely see a dead bird or hare or rabbit or squirrel ? The fact is not mysterious when we come to look into it. It may have been thought that what nature does must be well done." Then she suggests another possible reason for the custom. "Possibly another reason against burial was the desire to prevent anything like the material cult of the dead and the association of the fortunes of the immortal soul with those of the mortal body, such as prevailed among the Egyptians whose practices were doubtless known to the Magi by whom, rather than by any one man, the Mazdean law was formed." She then adds : "Finally, the last rites provided a recurrent object-lesson conducive to the mental habit of separating the pure from the impureThe rule of every religion is designed largely, if not chiefly, as a moral discipline."²

The main principle lying at the bottom of the Parsee custom of disposing of the dead and at the bottom of all the strictly religious ceremonies enjoined therewith is this : that the body, when the immortal soul has left it, should, preserving all possible respect for the dead, be disposed of in a way the least harmful to the living.

For properly understanding the Parsee ceremonies that relate to the disposal of the body, we must look to the

1. The contemporary Review. October 1907 p. 495.

2. "Among the Buddhists of Thibet the dead are given to dogs and birds of prey as a last act of charity to feed the hungry."

ancient Zoroastrian ideas of sanitation, segregation, purification and cleanliness as expressed in the Vendidad of their Avestic scriptures. As Prof. Darmesteter says, all these ceremonies can be summed up in two words which are the same as those which sum up to day all the prophylactic measures in the case of an epidemic, *viz.*,

1. To break the contact of the living with the real or supposed centre of infection.

2. To destroy the centre itself.

Again, we must bear in mind the idea of simplicity observed in this manner of the disposal of the dead. The Persian poet Saadi sings :

Chun âhang-i raftan kunad jâu-i pâk
Chê bar takht mordan chô bar rui-i khâk.

i. e., when the pious soul thinks of departing, it is all the same whether one dies on a throne or on bare ground.

The Parsee custom of the disposal of the dead illustrates, as it were, the above words of the poet. The method of carrying the body and of its disposal from the beginning to end is the same for all, the rich and the poor.

Among the ancient Iranians a good deal of importance was attached to what we may term the purification of the body, the reason was that it was believed—and it is a very reasonable belief that the physical purity or the purity of body is a step towards the purity of the soul. Purity is as essential for the good of the body as for the good of the soul. "*Yaosdâo mashyâi aipi Zanthem valishta*"¹, *i. e.*, "purity is the best from the (very beginning of one's) birth", is one of the most excellent sayings of the Avesta.

With the question of the preservation of the purity of the body is connected the question of Health. The Avesta is replete with injunctions to preserve Health. Injunctions for preserving Health. Prohibition of fasting, asceticism, &c.

Again, it does not enjoin any kind of fasting, celibacy, asceticism or the like. It preaches optimism. It teaches that God has created all things for the reasonable enjoyment of life. The idea of 'duty' must not be lost sight of in the midst of all enjoyments before us.

(1) Gâthâs : Yaçna XLVIII, 5 : Vendidad, V, 21.

ZOROASTRIANISM (2nd. Paper).

Revelation Considered as a Source of Religious Knowledge. (With special Reference to the Zoroastrian Religion.)

BY

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It is a trite saying that the East is the home of all great religions, and we get that trite saying coupled with that frequently repeated adage : "*Ex oriente lux.*" While, however, as Orientals we take pride in what is signified by this adage, which is by no means based on fiction, we cannot but admit that we owe to the West the systematization and the scientific method of investigation into religious teachings, and that the cultivation of the study of theology as a science has its origin entirely in the West. It is thus as true to say that the law comes from the West, as that light comes from the East, and we may well supplement the above quoted adage by saying : "*Ex oriente lux, ex occidente lex.*" In their effort to study Comparative Theology, scholars of the West have held regular conferences and conventions in Europe. It is but meet, then, that we in India should have regular periodical conventions or conferences like the present, for while we have retained all our characteristics as Orientals, including a very staunch adherence to our religious faiths and beliefs, we have, under the benign sway of a Western administration and a Western education, learnt to assimilate with those characteristics the scientific method of investigation into facts and beliefs adopted in the West. If only we could persuade ourselves in a spirit of tolerance to listen to and express our opinions with fairness and impartiality on the sentiments of others, we cannot fail to achieve the best results in knitting together the bonds of fellowship between the diverse races and creeds that have made India their home.

I should have liked, if circumstances permitted it, to present before this Convention for their consideration, and criticism, a succinct but yet a complete aspect of the teachings of Zarathushtra, the prophet of ancient Irân, the prophet who flourished in times of which we have no record, and about whose life and doings we have the most conflicting accounts even in the books written by Zoroastrians. For while he is depicted to us in the earliest and most authentic

of the Zoroastrian Scriptures, *viz.*, the Gâthâs and, in fact, in the whole of the Avestan writings, as quite a human being "born of a mortal," subject to all the vicissitudes of fortune to which man is naturally subject, in the later Scriptures written in the Pahlavi and Persian languages we find accounts in glowing pictures of countless marvels performed by the prophet to prove the excellence of his religion, and we also read that even his conception and birth were the result of a special divine scheme in which the archangels were the principal actors. I cannot hesitate to say what, I hope, will be admitted by all the members of this Convention, that when we meet with two such entirely conflicting statements of facts made at different periods of time, the earlier account must be accepted as more genuine and more truthful. Speaking for myself, I say that there is real greatness in a prophet undertaking manly struggles against his enemies and achieving triumphs in brave strife, whereas I fail to see any greatness in a prophet who is pictured as a mere figure-head and a tool, and who is made only the instrumentality of fulfilling a divine scheme in which the real actors are spiritual beings. I would take the prophet Zarathushtra as a human personality, and would judge all his work by the same standard as the work of other men. When I say this, I do not suggest that the prophet was gifted with only the average ability and faculties possessed by all mortals, but I say that he was in his time,—*primus inter pares*, the first among equals, but not belonging to a different and a higher stage of being than ordinary mortals. I may also say that he was by far more advanced in his thoughts than the average level and spirit of his times. But with all that, he was but a man, "born of a mortal womb," as one of the Avestan books, the Vendidad, calls him.

I propose to restrict myself in this thesis to the consideration of the sources of the knowledge of Zarathushtra. To say the same thing more particularly, I propose to consider whether the teachings which Zarathushtra gave to the world, were the result of his own meditation and thought, or whether they consisted of truths inspired into him, through the agency of a Divine Revelation. Several religions claim that the knowledge promulgated by them consists of truths inspired into the hearts of prophets by the instrumentality of a Divine Revelation. I have, no doubt, therefore, that the members of this Convention will all listen with interest to what Zoroastrianism has got to say on the subject of Revelation.

I propose in the course of this thesis first to settle the

meaning in which the term 'Divine Revelation' is used in Theology, and then to consider whether in that sense, the prophet Zarathushtra can be said, to have been inspired with such a Revelation from Ahura Mazda, the God of the Avesta as far as we are able to judge from the earliest, and thus the most authentic Avestan writings.

What, then, is Revelation ? In its ordinary acceptation, the term denotes in the abstract, the disclosure or communication of truth to men by God Himself, or by His authorized agents, and concretely, it is used to signify sacred truths divinely communicated to men for his instruction and direction. As another writer has put it, "Revelation is the objective approach of God to men, God entering into human life and history for man's salvation." * * * *

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I shall now proceed to consider what is the idea to be gained by a deep and critical study of the Zoroastrian Scriptures on the question of Revelation. I am not going to sit in judgment over the two religions, the religion of Christ and the religion of Zarathushtra. But I feel it my duty only to compare the two and to point out the differences, if any. Of course, as human frailty will have it, it is quite possible that I may be led once in a way to speak on the merits of the teachings of the two religions, but I shall endeavour, as far as possible, not at all to inveigh against the one or unduly to praise the other.

Numerous scholars have written on the religion of Zarathushtra, and it has become, as it were, the routine with them to call it a revealed religion. Indeed, for some reason or another—I do not know why—it is considered perhaps the greatest merit in a religion that it should be a revealed religion. In all ordinary matters, people adopt the view that a deliberately adopted *reasoned* belief, because of one's own choice and free will is far superior and far stronger to the imposed belief based on the dictates of some high authority or superior power. Why should it be otherwise with religious belief which forms the noblest sentiment of mankind ? Why should we accept without question the very guiding principle of our daily actions purely because some higher power with whom we are unable to have direct converse has ordained that it should be so ? The religion of Zarathushtra, although it has been styled by so many scholars as a revealed religion, has never claimed to be such in the most

authentic Scriptures themselves. Let us proceed to consider this question on the basis of Avestan texts.

A prepossessed mind does not like to challenge the statement found in the romantic details of the traditional accounts of the life of Zarathushtra written in comparatively modern times, which speak of the thousand and one miracles wrought by Zarathushtra for convincing the people of his time of the excellence of his religion—of the fire which he brought from heaven and always carried in his hand to the admiring gaze of the multitude—of the rod of authority which he was supposed to have been entrusted with in the form of a knotted stick—and amongst many other things of a like nature, of twenty one *Nasks* or books which he brought down from heaven for enlightening the vision of mankind on religious matters. These twenty one books constitute what is called the Revelation of Zarathushtra. Now it may be that Zarathushtra went about with a stick,—and a knotted stick, if the sentimentalist would like to have it so—but with that exception the whole of the story of miracles and of the Fire of Heaven and the twenty one *Nasks* is but a myth. We find no mention made of the Fire of Heaven in the *Gâthâs* or even in the later Avesta. You have to come down to the latest writers for this intelligence. Perhaps it was a mighty revelation vouchsafed to these modern authors for their self-edification, and for the edification of their willing believers. Where is the story of the thousand and one miracles of Zarathushtra in the pages of his own compositions—the *Gâthâs*—or in any portion of the Avesta? Why, as I said above, if you take this great sage as he is depicted in those quarters, you find him but an ordinary man, quite incapable of performing miracles, but on the contrary, surrounded by difficulties and meeting with disappointments which he feels as any other man does feel, but which he encounters with courage and contentment, and finally gains success in his noble cause. He does nothing which has any supernatural or preternatural ring about it. His measures are human; his resources are human; but so great is his work that though a man, he shines out quite above the level of his contemporaries. He is *Primus inter pares*. Never is it for a moment suggested in those really authentic writings that the spread of the religion of Zarathushtra is to be accounted for in the miracles performed by its founder. The greatest pride of the Zoroastrian is that apart from any supernatural or preternatural agency, the spread of the religion which he professes to follow, and its survival up to the

present day is due only and solely to the dominion which it has been able to exercise on the minds of men by the excellence of its teachings, the universality of its principles, and the rational tone of its doctrines. Take the very words of Zarathushtra who says :

"Hear ye this with the ears, behold ye this with the light of your mind ! Fix ye now, each man judging for himself, the choice of faith :"—Yasna XXX. 2.

Or again,

"Thus forth I announcing speak ; hear ye ; now harken, ye who from far have come, and ye from nearer ; for now think ye all aright, *deliberate* ye (on what I say)."—Yasna XLV. 1.

We do not find any claims put forward by Zarathushtra to his being a special messenger of God speaking forth the mandates of the Almighty. All he desires of his audience is a patient hearing and a calm and impassioned judgment, but he claims no special authority. He does not rely on any miracles for propagating his doctrines, but depends on the soundness of his propaganda viewed from the standpoint of reason. If miracles had contributed to the spread of his doctrine, and if it was by some agency other than the mere force of argument that Zarathushtra succeeded in his mission, what reason would there be for him to lament, as he does in Yasna XLVI. complaining that his following was but small, and that his friends, relatives and associates had all deserted him ? And then to avert entire disaster what does he seek for in his prayer to Ahura Mazda ? Not for any supernatural power, not for ability to perform miracles, not for a recognition by men of the fact that he carries a Divine Revelation which all men must implicitly believe in, but he says :

"To Thee in grief I cry, O Lord, vouchsafe Thy grace to me, as friend bestows on friend, showing me with pureness the *best riches of the Good Mind*."—Yasna XLVI. 2.

It is by means of the good mind and by the force of argument that he seeks to convince his contemporaries. We find in the *Farvardin Yasht*, a succinct biography of Zarathushtra. He is there described as perhaps the greatest of men, but there too there is not a word of any superhuman achievements or the performance of any miracles. I have dealt on this story of miracles at some length, because it is largely on this that the genuineness of the theory of Revelation is based. The Immaculate Conception, if true, was a miracle. The idea of the Trinity is nothing, if it is not based on these miracles which are its fountain source. Put these

away, and you remove the very corner-stone on which is reared the idea that God specially manifested Himself on this earth for conveying religious truths to mankind.

Is it, then, that the religion of Zarathushtra is called a revealed religion, purely on hazy and mythical stories of later generations? Before coming to this, I should like to point out how absurd it is to say that the religion of Zarathushtra was a revealed religion. As we have seen above each man is asked to think, to use his own reason, and then decide for himself what religion he should adopt. Can such a belief adopted or discarded after the exercise of a well-reasoned judgment be termed faith in a Revelation? Could any one who professes to communicate the word of God to man, allow the latter to sit in judgment on the excellence or otherwise of the divine message itself, and not merely on the fact of its being a divine message? But who could ever imagine that the bringer of a Divine Revelation, meant specially to be implicitly believed in by all without question, should plainly come forward and tell his hearers that they are to accept or reject the teachings that he is going to impart to them, according as it seems proper to them. Surely a prophet with a Revelation would not for a moment suggest its rejection. You could not expect him to tell his hearers that they are free to sit in judgment upon doctrines specially communicated by God for their benefit, and to believe or not to believe in them, according to their choice.

Now let us consider what may perhaps have led even the most renowned scholars to designate the teaching of Zarathushtra by the name of a revelation. We continually find Zarathushtra soliloquising, and in the midst of such soliloquies he is often appealing to Ahura Mazda to teach him right truths, so that he may, in his turn, be able to impart them to the whole world. The whole of Yasna XLIV. runs in this strain. Zarathushtra puts various queries to Ahura Mazda, and calls for accurate replies. We also find him saying over and over again : "O Mazda, with the tongue of Thine own mouth declare it, that I may teach it to all the living." The answers to queries of this nature appear to have been understood as the revelation by Ahura Mazda to Zarathushtra. But they can be so called only in a metaphorical language.

Out of no less than nineteen different queries addressed direct to Ahura Mazda in this chapter XLIV. of the Yasna, not one is directly answered. In all cases the answers are either implied in the questions themselves or are left to be

gleaned from the context. And, as a rule, the source from which the answers are derived, is mentioned. It is usually the good mind, and sometimes it is the "intelligence" which evolves the answer by drawing inferences from the laws pervading the universe. In the course of this very chapter, in the ninth strophe, the term religion is defined as laws propounded from the brain of a genius through the understanding of the immutable laws prevailing the universe. Here, then, is an ideal description given by the prophet Zarathushtra himself as to what a religion is and should be. Can any one assert with the force of reason on his side, that the prophet Zarathushtra, in spite of this declaration, must have been divinely inspired in his mission, in some mysterious manner? This could hardly have been the case, considering the idea which he seems to have had of what a religion should be. It is, necessary, however, to solve a difficulty which might possibly be raised in this connection. The genius from whose master-mind the religious laws are said to emanate is described to be "like Ahura Mazda". One might be led to imagine from this, that, as no man can be expected to have a mind like that of Ahura Mazda, the source must be something superhuman. The solution of this difficulty is to be arrived at by a study of other parts of the Gâthâs in which the same simile occurs. We find the expression used more than once in the Gâthic texts. Men are told to strive to be like Ahura Mazda in intelligence. Again, a man who devotes himself all his life to the betterment of the cause of the whole world, is said to be like Ahura Mazda, and we are also told that the ideal—the goal which the man of wisdom seeks to attain to, is the intelligence or the mind of Ahura Mazda. Hence it is clear that the use of the somewhat strange simile ought not to lead us to understand that the mind of the expositor of religion is superhuman, or anything but human.

Then, again, you find from the Gâthâs that not once will a prayer by Zarathushtra for the acquisition of any knowledge from Ahura Mazda be heard by Him and replied to in any direct manner. But invariably, and without any exception, we find that all gifts are gained through the good mind and righteousness, and through the power which comes from the knowledge acquired by a righteous exercise of the good mind, and through the strength of devotion or firm conviction which necessarily follows from this power of knowledge. Indeed, Zarathushtra has himself manifested, both directly and indirectly, the way in which he has been able to gain his

ideas of God and all knowledge about the Divine. And that way is by no means the path of Divine Revelation or mysterious inspiration.

If the different passages of the Gâthâs are read as a whole, one would see clearly that they contain the result of the *meditation* of the prophet on various subjects. The burden of the Gâthic chapter, Yasna XLIII., is : "I *thought* Thee bounteous, O Mazda" etc. We find a regular train of *thoughts* expressed in the chapter in the order in which they rush into the mind of the prophet when he is in a contemplative mood. If meditation and the result of meditation, is revelation, then alone could the teachings of Zarathushtra be called a revelation. But the sense in which the word "Revelation" is used in Theology is not this, and it is therefore unnecessary to pursue this idea any further.

But is not Zarathushtra a prophet? Did he not come into this world with a mission? And if these questions are answered in the affirmative, can it be denied that he came with a revelation? Such is the way in which I have heard some people arguing. That Zarathushtra founded a definite monotheistic system of religious belief, there can be no doubt. In the sense of his being a religious founder and the promulgator of the religion, he deserves the name of a prophet. And, indeed, he did "preach forth" far and wide, his doctrines. The term "Prophet", derived as it is from the same root as the word "Professor", literally denotes a "preacher forth". It conveys, though much more intensively, the same notion as is conveyed by the word "Professor". The difference in the meaning of these two words is that of *degree*, not of *kind*; and a prophet is not necessarily "inspired" in the sense in which the word is used in connection with the subject of Revelation, just as a Professor is not. But supposing this argument from the etymological significance of the term "prophet" to be incorrect, I contend that it is improper to call a man by a particular appellation, and merely from that to argue that he possesses certain qualities, qualifications and faculties. It is not fair to give a man the title of "prophet", and then say that he is endowed with the gift of a special inspiration or Divine Revelation. Then as regards Zarathushtra's "mission". This is again a technical language, and like any other technical language, is liable to be misapplied and misunderstood. When we say that Zarathushtra came with a mission on this earth, we mean that he attempted to spread broadcast, the principles of the system of religion which he founded, and that he meant his religion to be uni-

versal. It is rather the character of universality in his religion than its being a special inspiration that leads us to speak of Zarathushtra's mission on this earth. I am tempted to compare what I have just said of the prophet and his mission with what we so commonly say of the poet and his mission. We say "*Poeta nascitur, non fit*"—the poet is born, not made. And we also say of certain poets that they came with a certain mission on earth. And yet nobody has ever suggested that poets are divinely inspired with any certain message which they, in their turn, spread among mankind. The language used in connection with poets and prophets is alike figurative, and I contend that it is improper to use such language in a philosophical and theological disquisition and to draw therefrom conclusions which are bound to be illogical. For the rules of logic require that all figurative language must be eschewed from syllogisms.

As regards the prophecy of Zarathushtra, I believe it would not be out of place to point out definitely the position assigned to him in the Gâthâs. Yasna XXIX. represents the crying petition of the universe for a leader to guide the affairs of the world with a powerful hand and a masterly mind, and the grievance is addressed direct to Ahura Mazda. The prayer is none else than that Ahura Mazda should send some one from above to guide the affairs of the world, where might appeared then to have a mastery over right. But to interfere in this way would conflict with the well defined principle of the government of the world by immutable laws. And hence we do not find Ahura Mazda doing what Jupiter is said to have done in Greek mythology. He sends no King Log or King Stork in the midst of the world. No, He points out to the universe—and that is all—that there is one man in its midst, Spitama Zarathushtra, who, by his own excellence, has been able to win the appreciation of the Almighty, and as such deserved to be the leader of man and nature on earth. The original grievance does not appear to have been mitigated, and we find a bit of grumbling on the part of the applicants, and undoubtedly the grumbling is occasioned by the fact that the leader asked for, from above, is not given. The natural inference from this is that the mission of Zarathushtra was not in the shape of a Divine Inspiration specially vouchsafed for the occasion—that the religion taught by him was not a Divine Revelation, but that by the force of his own personality and excellence and supremacy over all others of his time, Zarathushtra was able to win for himself an audience sufficient to

make a start—and an efficient start—for the propagation throughout the length and breadth of the universe, of the system of religious belief that owed its origin to his own fertile and inventive brain.

Still more direct testimony on the point is found in other stray passages in the *Gâthâs*. In chapter XLVIII. of the *Yasna*, we are told that the intelligent ones find all the deepest doctrines of Ahura Mazda unfolded to them through the wisdom which results from the good mind. This gives a direct answer to the theorists who maintain that the deepest doctrines of the religion must proceed from a mysterious Revelation. For here you are told in so many words that by means of the good mind all the most hidden truths can be found out, if only you intelligently apply your mind in the proper direction. What is true of the method of acquiring other branches of knowledge is here said to be true also of the method of acquiring original religious knowledge, viz., that you have to cogitate well with your mind, and the knowledge which you seek is bound to be yours. Again, in *Yasna* XLV., we are told that the knowledge about Ahura Mazda is to be gained through the queries of the good mind which itself gives the answers to the queries through the intelligence which Ahura Mazda has gifted us with. What does this show? Only this, that the prophet teaches men to understand Ahura Mazda in the way in which he himself did. And what is this method of arriving at a knowledge of Ahura Mazda? None else but to raise questions and to answer those questions one after another, as they arise, on a rational basis. In other words, the knowledge of the teaching of and about God is acquired by holding a mental disquisition, by raising doubts and answering those doubts, by raising objections and answering them.

I referred above to the traditional record about Zarathushtra's bringing the Revelation in the shape of twenty one *Nasks*. I have deliberately attached the least importance to this story, because, as every student of the Zoroastrian religious scriptures knows full well, it is not only most improbable, but an entirely inaccurate statement of existing facts. The summary of the twenty one *Nasks* which must evidently have existed at one time, is given, in some cases with great elaboration, in the eighth book of the Pahlavi *Dinkard*. The portions of the *Nasks* which are now extant, show quite definitely that they are the work of quite different hands and written at different periods of time. I make

bold to say that, considering the nature of the subjects dealt with in the *Nasks* must all have been prepared by different hands and at different times. Thus we see how entirely fabulous is the statement one reads in the Persian *Zartôst-Nâmâh*, of the prophet of ancient Iran having illumined the world by twenty one *Nasks* which he was said to have received from Ahura Mazda.

I have here all along sought to prove that the religion propagated or rather founded by Zarathushtra was not a revealed religion in the sense that it was imparted to the prophet through the medium of a Divine Inspiration. In this connection it would not be improper to point out that where a prophet claims for his religion the source of revelation, he does not fail to make that declaration himself, in the most explicit terms. Thus Mohammed claimed to be the special messenger of God in so many words. In the famous temptation-scene, where Satan tries to lead Christ away to the path of the Devil, you find Jesus declaring with pride, "Do not tempt the Lord, thy God." It is peculiarly remarkable to notice the answer which Zarathushtra is represented as having given in a similar connection, viz., in the course of the dialogue between him and Ahriman, as we find it described in the *Vendidad*, chapter XIX. When the latter taunts him with being but a man, "the son of Pourshaspa, born of a mortal womb", and as such, subject to temptations like any other mortal, what does he say? He does not claim for himself any special rank or dignity, he does not claim to be more than a mortal, but merely answers that he will, regardless of human frailty, succeed in withstanding the evil influence of Ahriman until the latter perished, and that he will struggle for this result, until he died. This imaginary dialogue, in which the prophet is supposed to have taken a part, is certainly of a much later date than Zarathushtra's own times, and yet we do not find any canonification of him as the special messenger of God on earth, but we find only a rational teaching for rooting out evil from the world—the evil which is personified in the figure of Ahriman.

There is one more point to which I should like to refer on the subject of Revelation in religion. The philosophy of the Zoroastrian system of religion is based on the idea of the immutability of the laws governing and regulating the universe. The admission of any interference of any sort in this government and regulation, would be inconsistent with the immutability of these laws. The interference through the medium of a Revelation and through prophets specially

delegated from on high, would form no exception to the rule. Hence it is that in Yasna XXIX., to which I have referred above, we find Ahura Mazda represented as declining to interfere in the evolution and working of the universe, on this very ground that He would thereby be violating the immutability of Nature's laws. If, then, we are to presume in the case of the Zoroastrian system of philosophy, as we are bound *prima facie* to do in any system of teaching, that it is consistent with itself in its various parts, there can be no room in its propaganda for belief in a divinely inspired revelation.

I now invite the criticism of the members of this Convention on the ideas that I have expressed in this paper. As I observed in the earlier part of my paper, it is considered perhaps the greatest merit in a religion that it should be a revealed religion. And I have found several members of my own community, styling themselves orthodox in their religious beliefs, who have felt shocked at what they would call a blasphemy of the religion if it was designated as unrevealed. I believe that a criticism of that sort might well be spared. For there is no argument in making vain assertions based on purely sentimental grounds. There can be no compromise with the great truths of religion. And if it is true that the Zoroastrian religion is not a revealed religion, the most vehement assertions of sentiment to the contrary, cannot convert it into a Revelation. I, therefore, do not shrink from uttering the plain truth in plain words, and I have given the reasons by which I have come to this particular conclusion. I do not see why anybody should call it a blasphemy to say that a religion which is imagined to be a revelation, is in reality not such. Does it in any way lessen our esteem and reverence for the Almighty, if we say that man is the *causa causans* of religion and the religious sentiment? Why, on the contrary, it would redound all the more to the glory and greatness of the Creator, it must excite in us greater, higher and nobler sentiments of reverence for Him, for His having blest us with such higher gifts and nobler sentiments. While I assert that religion is the creation of man, I do not forget that man is a creature of God. And the more I admire the greatness and excellence of man-made religion, the greater is the esteem in which I hold God for having gifted man with such high potentialities, and a greater perfection.

I know, however, that the question is controversial, and one that must lead to the expression of diverse opinions from

this Convention. I invite those diverse opinions. For I believe that some good is bound to result from an exchange of thoughts, and from a debate which is carried on in a spirit of fairness. Two stones striking each other always generate a certain quantity of heat, and if they strike sufficiently hard, they also generate some light. And I strongly believe that the expression of controversial opinions, however varying they may be, must also result in the discovery of some new ideas, and the illumination of some obscure questions.

This thesis is written from the standpoint of the Zoroastrian religion, and in this connection I should like to point out one of the remarkable characteristics of that religion. Every initiate into the religion has to make an acknowledgment of his belief in the teaching in the form of a certain recital which is known as the "Confession of Faith." Amongst other epithets applied to the religion in the text containing this recital, one is that Zoroastrianism is always in the front of conflicts carried on without the use of weapons. In other words, the Zoroastrian religion is characterised as argumentative. It is ever ready to throw the gauntlet and to challenge inquiry, and it never shrinks from any battle. A religion, if it deserves to have any value attached to it, ought to shirk no battle, but should prepare itself for every onslaught, and, instead of attempting to escape inquiry and criticism, it ought to court and even challenge criticism. Zoroastrianism, at any rate, does court an inquiry and does challenge criticism. And as an orthodox follower of the faith, I too court an inquiry into the thoughts to which I have given expression in my paper, and if the criticisms offered are adverse to me, they will be all the more welcome, for adverse criticisms always have a chastening effect.

BUDDHISM.

A short description of Tibetan Buddhism

BY

Mr. DAWSANDUP.

ABOUT 1600 years ago, when the first great Buddhist King of Tibet (Srong-tsan-gampo) himself an Avatar of the Bodhisatwa Avalokiteswara (the Vishna of the Buddhist Trinity) first introduced writing and the Buddhist scriptures from India into Tibet and began the conversion of the Tibetans to Buddhism, there was another religion prevailing then in Tibet. This other religion was the Bön religion. It was a religion akin to the various forms of Druidism of the ancients or Shamanisms and Charlatanisms prevailing even now in various out of the way places of Tibet itself and amongst the people of Sikkim and Bhutan and also in the south of Russia. It had various mystic rites and rituals and a school of philosophy of its own. It believed in the transmigration of souls, and also that the soul could be purified of its sins by pujas and sacrifices. It also believed that some souls might become evil spirits and afflict or render aid to living persons. It believed in the existence of local Deities, Genii, Fairies, hobgoblins, evil spirits, &c. At about the same time Buddhism in India too had developed into the Mahayanic Form inculcated by Nagarjuna, Arya Asanga, Aswaghosha, Dingnag, Arya Deva, Dharma Kirti and others. When it was introduced into Tibet, it adopted those forms of dignified and impressive rites of the Bön Religion and eschewed the gross and misleading ones—thus utilizing those forms which were good and which the people had been used to regard as holy and instilling the spirit of Buddhism into the whole so thoroughly, as to make it quite Buddhistic. Thus was Mahayanic Buddhism introduced into Tibet where it took firm root and has ever since flourished and kept on growing and spreading until the whole of Mongolia and a large part of the population of China has been brought under its benign influence. It may be here asked what good did Buddhism effect in Tibet which the Bön Religion left unaccomplished. To this the answer is while Buddhism preaches Budhahood and Nirvan for its final Goal

the Bön Religion had only shewn a path for an improved form of Existence in Samsara.

Later on about a hundred years after the above king, his grand-son king Ti-srong-deutsan invited the great Indian Saint and Pandit Padma Sambhawa of Urgyen into Tibet, where he lived for some 46 years and others say 56 years. He preached the Tantric Form of Buddhism then prevailing in India into Tibet and called it the Mantrayanic Buddhism. As this was the older form of Buddhism preached in Tibet it has been called the Nying-ma-pa or Old Faith. At the same time the Khanpos Bodhisatwa and Vimala Mitra established a priesthood devoting themselves to the observances of priestly Vows and discipline of Buddhist Sramana. The Mantra Yanics called themselves Ngagslugpa (Mystics) and the Sramana were called Do-lugpas (Sutrayanics). The external form by which they distinguished themselves was in the formers' adopting red caps while the latter used yellow ones. The Nyingmapa Lamas and Hierarchs might marry and beget children while the Sutrayanics remain celibate, and observe the Priestly Vows.

Later on, about a thousand years ago, Atisa, a famous Pandit from India visited Tibet and reformed the Buddhist Faith which has since then been the state religion of Tibet. Later on, Tsong-ka-pa appeared as another reformer. In practice the Do-lug-pa Lamas devote their lives and energies in mastering the Kahgyur or Commandments of the Lord Budha and try to attain Samadhi by the means and method preached there and aim at attaining Nirvana by the following means :—

(1) The realisation of the 4 Noble Truths, and the non-ego of Self.

(2) and by taking the Noble eightfold path and the observance of the 253 vows of a Sramana.

The Nying-mapas also have recourse to Dhyana and Samadhi as the approved means to obtain Buddhahood. The Dolugpas call their Final Goal by the Negative name of Nirvana (meaning total extinction of everything that could constitute the idea of selfish existence) while the Mystics (Ngag-lugpas) call their Final Goal by the positive name of perfect Buddhahood (Dzogpai-Sangyay).

The negative goal of the Sutrayanics (Dolugpas) might be best understood by the state called Sunnyata or Prajna-Paramita, which is expounded thus :—Sunnyata is devoid of Forms, Sound, Smell, Taste and Sensation, and Sat (Reality)

nor has it eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, feelings or desires or consciousness etc.

The Mystics call their final goal the attainment of the state of Perfect Buddhahood, knowing everything. The positive view of the Final state is (1) Self-knowledge, Self-Enlightenment and Self-Emancipation. This positive view of the Final Goal consequently has for its progressive stages also positive stages. They are divided into the threefold Personalities and the fivefold Perfection. The former are

- (1) Dharma Kaya (the Body of Truth)
- (2) Sambhoga (the Body of Perfection)
- (3) Nirmana (the Phenomenal body)

(1) The first comprises the entire Cosmic Truth (Spiritual and Substantial, Nirvana and Samsara), Names and Forms, Abstract and Substantial.

(2) The second is the embodiment of all the good qualities into one perfect being.

(3) The third is the incarnate being through whom the sentient beings of the world are taught, guided and helped. It is an Offshoot or Offspring from the Sambhoga Kaya.

This gives the idea of how the Infinitely Great Cosmic Truth affects the microscopic or Infinitely Small and Minute Samsaric beings. It shows the downward relation from the Infinitely Great to the Infinitely Small.

The fivefold personalities are called the five Dhyani Budhas, and represent each a perfected Attribute of a Perfect Budha, and shows the upward process of Emancipation from a sentient Samsaric being towards the Infinitely Great and Eternal, pervading all-comprising Dharma Kaya.

The Do-lug Lamas called yellow-hats by European writers, have 13 stages or degrees to attain before reaching Nirvana.

Of the thirteen, if a person only attains the first stage, he is thenceforth ever happy and after attaining the sixth stage, viz Arhantship, he is incapable of falling back into Samsara.

An Arhant of the 8th degree obtains the power of multiplying himself into 30,000 avatars, each capable of serving and helping others. The Mystics or Mantrayanic have their Bodhisatwas, Swamis, Yogis, Siddhipurushes, Mahatmas, Paramhangsas. In fact, the rites and rituals and Saddhanas, Dhyans are so alike with Hinduism that at first sight it is difficult to distinguish which is which.

In fact the doctrines of the Hindu sect of Shaivas and

Shaktyas are so nearly alike in forms of practices to the Buddhist Tantric practices that it takes a very keen observation to distinguish the difference between the two, and hence the opinion that the Tantric form of Tibetan Buddhism is a degenerate or alloyed and adulterated form of the pure doctrine of the Lord Budha.

We, on the other hand, claim that it is a higher and a better development of the same. We say that the ethical and moral Code of Buddhism as found in the Tripitakas which consists of the Vinayas, Sutras, and Abhidhammas are as the truth of a tree. The Mahayanic doctrines with its various means and method, Sutras, Mantras, Dharanas, Dhyanas, Sadhanas of the 6 and the 10 Paramitas etc are as the foliage and flowers. And the Mantrayana with its signs, symbols and mystic words and truths pregnant with meanings and its avowed methods of utilising the arts, sciences, music, poetry, and wealth, nay even the passions in the path of attaining spiritual advancement and finally Buddhahood, is as the fruit and essence of Buddhism.

Both the Sutrayanics and the Mantrayanics have recourse to the Refuge formula prayers, mantras, dharanas, sadhanas, and samadhi as the means to obtain Buddhahood. Both adopt the Paramitas as the approved path and means to obtain Bodhisattwaship and Buddhahood (Samyak Sam-Buddhahood).

There are four classes or degrees of Mandalas—through which the disciple has to pass, if he means to attain Enlightenment in one or 3 lifetimes. These are called the (1) Kriya (2) Upaya (3) Yoga and (4) Anuttara.

All of them lead to the obtainment of the Quiescent state of mind called samadhi—a super-conscious state of the mind in which the ordinary perceptive and responsive functions of the mind are held passive and a keen thrilling consciousness shines forth clearly, the duration of which state is marked by a state of inexpressible and ecstatic bliss at the beginning. But as the disciple gets used to it, the feeling of bliss wears off and only the state of clearness and super-consciousness remains. This state of mind is believed to be the foretaste of the Eternal Blissful state of perfect Buddhahood. By immersing oneself into the samadhi, the mental faculties all get refreshed, strengthened and expanded. Samadhi is the pure intellectual Reservoir and Filter wherein the dregs of selfish ideas get thoroughly strained off and the mind gets a fresh impulse of Faith, Energy, Zeal, and

clearness. The mind by frequent enjoyment of samadhi acquires expanse, depth, purity, and strength. It is the crucible where every illusory idea of an individual and independent existence apart from the Dharma Kaya gets at first expunged and finally destroyed. It is this state of the mind in which clairvoyants enjoy retrospective and premonitory visions, telepathists read thoughts and saints get their inspirations etc.

Now as to the means adopted to attain it, there are four classes or degrees as enumerated above. Each again has its own peculiar Ideal Goal, Meditation, practises and fruits.

Every fully ordained Lama or Khanpo of a Nyingma or Kargyut monastery must pass through all the 4 stages before he gets ordained. These four stages are

(1) Kriya, (2) Upaya (3) Yoga and (4) Anuttara.

The Noviciate priest, at first has recourse when he wishes to devote himself earnestly to seek spiritual development, to the Mandal of the Kriya Deities. These are male and female Bodhisatvas of Passive Nature e.g. Manjusri Avalokiteswara, Bajrapani, Taras (the white and green Taras), Lakshmi, Saraswati etc. The devotee is then required to abstain from all animal food, even from milk and butter, radishes, onions, garlic and even fungi are forbidden. He lives on a single meal and recites the mantra of the particular deity he has chosen. This is the first step where he tries to acquire merits by living a pure and peaceful life by meditating on a chaste ideal and supporting life by cereals and natural food and regarding cleanliness as the most imperative duty. But here he is passive and is a worshipper. Next he takes, as it were, a more active view, enters the Upaya state; here the Deities are represented as of the Active type like Hayagriva, Bajra Kundati, Vijaya, and Yama Raja etc. etc. He still regards cleanliness as necessary, but godliness as imperative. He identifies himself with the Deity on whom he is meditating in whole as well as in parts, in form, speech and mind. He has to dismantle the old form of vulgar human shape with its deformities and weaknesses, and meditate upon the ideal shape, forget small talk, and recite only mantras, forget worldly and selfish desires and entertain universal and Altruistic sentiments only.

In this stage all the passions serve as doors and paths to him. He may be proud, but his pride must be devoid of egotism. It must be the righteous pride which scorns to do a mean deed or entertain a mean thought or speak an unbe-

coming word. He may be ambitious, but his ambition must be of the highest, which aims at such a sovereignty from which there is no fall possible, and such an exaltation, from which no deterioration is possible.

He may be covetous, but covets only such a treasure which perishes not, which is never exhausted. Then having passed well through this stage of his spiritual training he must next merge himself into Yaga or meditation. No more Deities as gods or ideals to worship, but now he must enter into an analysis of his own being, what relation he bears to the Universal whole, both physically and spiritually. He even now contemplates upon deities both male and female, in fact they are the more magnified and expanded beings that he had worshipped as a Kriya Deity, identified himself with as an Upaya Deity and now he is to identify and realise them in his own person. The external condition now imposed upon him from his expanded knowledge of facts is necessarily light. He no longer sees the utility of fasts and penances, refraining from certain diets and lines of action. His mind is now so trained that he cannot but act or live rightly and wisely and profitably.

The 4th and the last stage of his development and initiation is the initiation into the Anuttara Mandala (the circle or conclave of beings above whom there is no other Deity).

Here he regards his own personality as being made up of several others and these others again, are all divine beings, Universal Forces, Laws, and Rays of Mercy and Love. He no longer occupies the situation of an entity existing in space, but he is an inseparable portion of the Cosmic Whole. Space exists in him. Time exists in him. He is in the universe and the Universe is in him.

Then his least exertions, actions, motions, become significant and full of importance. They become graceful and harmonious and beneficial. His least words, sentences, and utterances, become all sacred truths. They partake of the nature of Dharma.

His thoughts and wishes when formed, are as potent as the thunderbolt, irresistible, and enduring as Time.

From man he becomes a God, a Divine being. From the finite he becomes infinite. Death to him is easier than the change of garments to a fashionable person. He has from the original seed sown in the field of spiritual development, passed through the four stages of Kriya, Upaya, Yoga, and

Anuttara, mandalas,—developed from the seed into the embryo, the shoot, the foliage, and flowering stages, and lastly the fruit bearing stage of Anuttara become capable of multiplying himself without any limit so that what we see on the natural physical plane—the fact of reproducing millions of seeds—each just as capable of reproduction, as the first original seed—utilised and proved possible on the spiritual plane also.

We claim for our Bodhisatwas the power of reproducing or reincarnating themselves in as many forms as they deem necessary.

BUDDHISM (2nd. Paper).

BY

Mr. Anagarika Dharmapala.

To understand the absolute mission of Buddha it is necessary to read the Pali Jātaka, containing the 550 biographical sketches of the previous births of the great Teacher before he became Buddha.*

Four asankheyyas and 100,000 kalpas ago there was born a son in the family of a Brahman of great wealth, whose name was Sumedha. As a boy he was given the Vedic education that his position demanded. His father died when he was a youngman and became heir to the large inheritance of his family. The young Brahman reflected thus—"What misery to be born again and again, therefore I will seek the extinction of all sin and sorrow." Thinking thus and renouncing his desires for lustful enjoyment, he distributed his immense wealth to the poor and needy, and taking the garb of an ascetic, went to a hill near the Himalayas and began his meditations. From time to time the ascetic Sumedha visited the city nearest to his retreat and the people worshipped him for his holy attainments. The Buddha Dipankara, who was then preaching to the people the doctrine of Nirvana, having accepted the invitation of the people of the Himalayan town, visited the city of Sumedha, and the people were decorating the road, when Sumedha happened to pass that way and asked

The great renunciation of Nirvana by the Brahman Sumedha.

* The life of Buddha, as given by the writer, will be found in the Appendix.

the cause, when he was told that the Buddha Dipankara is visiting the city, and the decorations are for his reception. The ascetic Sumedha, hearing the name of the Buddha, felt greatly delighted, and asked the men to give a bit of the road that he might personally exert to decorate it, in love of the Buddha, for he said the name itself is rare to be heard. His request was granted, and he began to decorate the portion of the road, but before he could finish it, the Buddha was approaching, and as he could not finish it, he thought that he would offer his body ; and laying himself on the mire for the Buddha and His Bhikkhus to walk upon, and remaining in this condition, he began to reflect : "This day if I so will, I can make an end of my passions, and reach the further shore of Nirvana, but why should I cross the ocean alone. A valorous man like me should attain to the perfected state of Buddha, and like Buddha Dipankara, convey across men and gods." The Buddha Dipankara approaching Sumedha halted, and addressing the Bhikkhus, said "Behold this austere ascetic, lo ! unnumbered kalpas hence, he will, like me, become a Buddha and be known as Buddha Gautama. His father will be Suddhodana Rāja, his mother Māyā, the name of the city will be called Kapila, and he will make the great Renunciation, and sitting at the foot of the Aswattha Bodhi tree, will attain to the supreme state of Buddha, and save millions of beings, and, etc." Devas of ten thousands worlds rejoiced, when the Buddha Dipankara made this declaration, and men and gods said that if they would fail to grasp the Doctrine : now under the Buddha Dipankara, they would not miss it under the Buddha Gautama. As a token of the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Buddha Dipankara, all the auspicious signs made themselves manifest and there was joy and peace in the hearts of men.

Then the mighty ascetic Sumedha reflected : "The Buddhas are incapable of uttering a lie, a Buddha I shall surely be and I must now search for the *Buddha kāraṇa* condition necessary for the consummation of my cherished desire. Then he found that he must practise the Ten Perfections, called the Pāramitās, which are as follow :—

Dana—absolute charity, even to the sacrificing of one's life ; Shila—the observance of the rules of perfect bodily and mental purity never deviating from the path of moral perfection ; Nekkhamma—Renunciation of all lustful desires, sacrificing self for the welfare and happiness of others, life after life, till perfection is reached. Panna or prajna—Acquiring

wisdom from whatever source, high or low ; Viriya or virya.—Heroic exertion, undaunted courage, persevering to the end till perfection is achieved ; Khanti or kshanti—forgiving, patience, enduring all things, never showing repugnance or anger. Sacca or Satya—Absolute truthfulness, unswerving in the path of truth ; Adhitthana or Adhithāna—Immovable like the mountain peak, never deviating from the path of virtue, but resolved to achieve his cherished desire ; Metta or Maitri—infinite love to all alike, like the love of the mother to her only son ; Upekkha or Upeksha—Equanimity, showing a spirit of equal-mindedness to friend and foe alike, like the earth that receives whatever is thrown upon her.

These ten Paramitas the Bodhisat fulfilled for four asankheyya and 100,000 kalpas, and by the virtue of having reached the consummation, he was born as the Prince Siddhartha and attained Buddhahood at Buddha Gaya, 2,497 years ago, under the Bodhi Tree.

The Ascetic Mortifications of The Prince Siddhartha.

From Kapilavastu the Prince rode on as far as the river Anoma, and having crossed the river, He entrusted His jewelled robe and the horse Kanthaka to Channa to be taken home ; with his sword He cut off his long locks, and taking them in his hand, He threw them into the air saying "If I am to become a Buddha let this my hair stay in the sky, but if not, let them fall to the ground." And the sacred locks were received in a jewelled casket by the god Sakra and taken to his heaven ; Brahmā Ghatikāra came in disguise as a hunter wearing the yellow dress, and the Prince seeing him, exchanged his own dress with that of the hunter, and with the bowl in hand which the hunter gave him he travelled on foot to the city of Rajagaha in Magadha, the capital of king Bimbisara. He begged food from house to house, and the people, seeing the incomparable beauty of the ascetic, began to wonder, and ask questions, who this illustrious person could be. Some said that the Sun god had come down in disguise, some went and told the king that a holy ascetic is in the city, and the king sent his men to watch his movements, and they followed him to the cave on the Pandava hill. There He sat, and looked at the food that He had gathered from the city people, and His stomach turned, for never before had He seen such repulsive food, but He began

to admonish Himself that He having renounced all luxuries, must not expect again to eat the food of a Prince. His disgust subsided, He ate the meal. The royal messengers reported to the king what they had seen and the king came to meet the Bodhisat, and seeing His radiant body, asked Him who He was, and the Bodhisat Prince said that, He is a Kshatriya, of the solar race, of the country of the Sakyas, near the Himalayas, and not having found happiness in the joys of the senses, He had renounced them, and is in search of Nirvana. The King offered half his kingdom if He would only stay, but when he found that the Bodhisat was unswerving, Bimbisara begged Him to visit his kingdom, first after His attainment of the Buddhahood.

Leaving the Pandava rock the Bodhisat went in search of the great Rishis, Alārakālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputra, who were supposed to have reached the heights of religious emancipation. With them He remained for some time, and learned everything what they had to teach but was not satisfied with their way, which by meditation they had attained—the Arupa Brahma condition, where perceptions were almost dormant, and the bliss of consciousness extended over a period of 84,000 kalpas. Then he practised the path of asceticism for nearly six years in the romantic syivan spot in Uruvela, near the river Nerañjara. Here He found the five Bhikkhus, who became His disciples and watched His austerities, day by day. He lived taking daily only a grain of rice, and the radiant body that was like that of a god, now became dark, and withered, and was reduced to a skeleton. The culmination of His asceticism reached when He fell down unconscious, and even the gods thought that he was dead.

A description of his ascetic life undergoing the most terrific phases of austerities is given in the Bhayabherava, Saccaka, Maha Sihanada, Bodhirājakumara, and Māgandiya Suttas of the Majjhima Nikaya. He realized that asceticism could not bring emancipation, and as he had reached the limits of austerities, he began again to take food to gain bodily strength, for without physical strength no mental activity was possible. And when the five Brahman Bhikkhus saw that the Bodhisat began to take material food, they lost faith in Him and left Him. Day by day the Bodhisat gained knowledge and strength and on the night previous to the attainment of Bodhi, He had a dream which he interpreted that he will attain Buddhahood ; and on the fullmoon day of Vaishakha, He went early and sat at the root of the

Ajapāla Banyan tree. It was while sitting there, that the daughter of the village chief Senāni, Sujātā, brought the milk food in a golden vessel to be offered to the tree-god, and on her arrival, she found the Bodhisat seated, with golden rays emanating, from His body and the whole tree illuminated by His radiance. This made Sujātā think that the tree-god had himself come down to take her offering, but the Bodhisat undeceived her and told her that He was no god but that He was in search of the secret of human happiness. Sujātā being pleased, offered Him the milk food which the Bodhisat accepted. Then leaving the tree, He came to the river and having bathed, ate the milk food, and spent the noon in a grove of Sal trees on the bank, and in the evening came to the spot where the Bodhi tree stood. Facing the East, He sat at the foot of the Tree, making the great resolution, "Let my skin and sinews become dry, let all the flesh and blood in my body dry up, but never from this seat will I stir until I have attained the supreme and absolute wisdom of Buddhahood."

The Attainment of Buddhahood.

IN that memorable full-moon night of the month of Vaishākha, the Śakya Prince, the Bodhisat Siddhartha, attained the supreme state of Anuttara Sammāsambodhi, illuminating the ten thousand world systems by the wisdom of His divine radiance. It was at this crisis that Māra, Lord of the Kāma world, came to conquer him. The followers of Māra began the battle, and the gods, Indra, Brahmā and their followers stood watching, and when the battle was raging, all the gods fled, and the Buddha was left alone. Māra came near to the seat where the Buddha was and shouted, "Siddhartha, arise from this seat ! It does not belong to you, but to me." And the Buddha answered "Māra, you have not fulfilled the Ten Perfections, nor have you made the five great gifts, nor have you striven for knowledge, nor for the welfare of the world, nor for enlightenment. This seat does not belong to you, but to me." The celestial cohorts of Māra fled, and Buddha triumphed over Kāma. Throughout the celestial realms there was rejoicing ; and the gods assembled at the Buddha's seat under the Bodhi tree, and offered him divine homage !

The Buddha then uttered the gāthā of victory :—

Aneka jāti sansāram,
Sandhā vissām anibbhisam,

Gahakārakam gavesanto,
Dukkā jāti punappunam,
Gahakāra dīthosi,
Puna geham nakāhasi,
Sabbāte phāsuka bhagga,
Gahakutam visamkhitam,
Visamkhara gatam cittam,
Tanhānam khaya majjhagā,

which has been thus rendered :—

“Many a House of Life
Hath held me
Seeking ever him who wrought
Those prisons of the senses sorrow-fraught ;
Sore was my ceaseless strife !
But now,
Thou Builder of this Tabernacle,
Thou !
I know Thee,
Never shalt thou build again
These walls of pain,
Nor raise the roof-tree of deceits,
Nor lay fresh rafters on the clay ;
Broken thy house is, and the ridge-pole split !
Delusion fashioned it !
Safe pass I thence
Deliverance to obtain.”

—Light of Asia.

After having attained to the supreme state of Bodhi, the Buddha sat at the foot of the Bodhi tree for seven days, experiencing the incomparable bliss of Nirvāna ; in the second week He remained standing, gazing at the Bodhi tree, paying homage to the visible embodiment of Absolute Truth which He had realized ; in the third week He spent in a cloister walking up and down in meditation, enjoying the bliss of Nirvāna ; in the fourth week He sat at the foot of the Banyan tree when a Brahman came to Him and asked Him the question “What makes a Brahman” ; the fifth week He spent at the Muchalinda tree, glorifying the life of solitude spent in love and holiness ; the sixth week He spent at the Rajāyatana tree, where He met the two merchants, Tapussa and Bhalluka ; and the seventh week, at the Ajapāla tree, where in response to Brahmā’s request He resolved to preach the Dharma.

It was in the first week that the Buddha discovered the great Law of Dependent Causation, otherwise called the Twelve Nidānas, or the root causes, operating in three inter-dependent categories, and linked together, thus making the

individualised being, the effect of his own karma. He reaps what he has sown, and sows in the way of generating fresh karma that he may reap hereafter. The following are the twelve Nidānas :—

Avijjā, Sankhāras, Viññāna, Nama-rupa, Salāyatana, Phasso, Vedanā, Tanhā, Upādānā, Bhavo, Jāti, and Jarāmarana.

Avijjā.—Ignorance of the four noble truths, ignorance of the 24 laws of cosmic phenomena and of the laws of righteousness.

Sāmkhāras.—Ideations in the planes of good, evil, and neither good nor bad karma and karmic action produced by word, deed or thought.

Viññāna.—Operating consciousness of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind in their totality.

Nāmarupa.—Nāma and rupa, the latter consisting of the body, the former sense feelings (vedanā); perceptions (saññā); and ideations (sankhāras). Body (rupa) is made up of the four compounds, earth, water, fire and air.

Salāyatana.—Six seats of consciousness mentioned under Viññāna,

Phasso.—Contact caused by each of the sense organs with objective forms, sound, smells, tastes, bodily touch, and subjective recollections.

Vedanā.—Three aspects of feeling or the sensations caused by viññāna in contact with the salāyatanas, which are threefold, pleasant, unpleasant, and neither pleasant nor unpleasant.

Tanhā.—The threefold desires for sense enjoyment in the planes of kāma, bhava, and vibhava. Tanha is caused by stimulating the sense organs in co-operation with viññāna.

Upādāna.—Attachment to sense pleasures; attachment to morbid ascetic habits; attachment to unscientific beliefs; attachment to an ego or self.

Bhavo.—Fertilising fields in the planes of Kama, Rupa, and Arupa. Kama is the world of the sense pleasures, celestial or human; Rupa is the world of the Brahmas obtained by the practice of the four Jhanas (Dhyanas); Arupa is the world of the formless where consciousness only exists with perceptions in potential form obtained by the practice of the vimokkhas or transcendental insight.

Jāti.—Birth in the seven states where individualised consciousness operates.

Jarā-marana.—Decay and death ; *soka*, sorrow ; *parideva*, lamentation ; *dukkha*, pain ; *domanassa*, grief ; and *upāyāsa*, despair.

This is the great cosmic problem which psychical students are asked to solve, whose solution means escape from the entire aggregation of *sansaric* misery which in its absolute completeness, only the Buddhas and Arahats can solve. The Lord having solved the great problem of existence and having realised the bliss of emancipation made the following ecstatic pronouncement :

“When the doctrine of Dependent Causation becomes clear to the ardent meditating Brahmana, then all His doubts fade away, since He has realised what the cause and the effect of phenomena is and when He has understood the cessation of causation, He stands like the sun illuminating the sky, dispelling the hosts of evil.”

In the fourth week, when the Lord was sitting at the root of Ajāpala Banyan tree, a certain Brahmana came up to him and spoke thus.—“By what does one become a Brahmana, and what are the characteristics that make a man a Brahmana ?” And the Lord answered :—

“He who has renounced all sinfulness, who is free from haughtiness, free from impurity, who is an accomplished master of the Vedas, who has fulfilled the duties of holiness, who exercises self-restraint and who has no attachment to things of the world ; such a man may justly call himself a Brahmana.”

From the Ajāpala Banyan tree the Lord went and sat at the root of the Muchalinda tree, and having enjoyed the bliss of solitude, made the following ecstatic pronouncement :—

“How blest the happy solitude
Of him who hears and knows the truth !
How blest is harmlessness towards all
And self-restraint towards living things !
How blest from passion to be free,
All sensuous joys to leave behind !
Yet far the highest bliss of all
To leave the pride which says, “I am”—*Warren*.

The Request of Brahma to Preach the Dhamma.

In the seventh week when the Lord was sitting at the root of the Ajapala Banyan tree, enjoying the bliss of Nirvana, the thought came to him : “This Doctrine is pro-

found, recondite, difficult of comprehension, good, and not to be reached by mere reasoning, subtle, and intelligible only to the wise. Mankind, on the other hand, is captivated, entranced, held spell-bound by its lusts ; and inasmuch as mankind is captivated, entranced and held spell-bound by its lusts, it is hard for them to understand the Law of Dependent Causation. If I were to teach the Doctrine, others would fail to understand me, and it would be weariness for me."

Thus did He ponder and His mind became inclined to remain in quiet, and not to preach the Doctrine.

Thereupon Brahmá perceived what was in the mind of the Blessed One and uttered "Lo, the world is lost, is ruined ! the mind of the Tathágata, the holy supreme Buddha is not inclined to action nor to proclaim the Doctrine." Then Brahmá appearing before Buddha and paying him homage, requested Him to preach the Dhamma inasmuch as there are beings who can understand the Doctrine, and uttered the following stanza :

"Climb thou Wise One, the top of Doctrine's palace
And thence gaze down serene on all the peoples.
Behold how all mankind is plunged in sorrow,
And how old age and death have overwhelmed them.
Arise Thou, O Hero, Victor in the battle,
O Leader, Guiltless One, go' mongst the nations !
The Doctrine, let the Exalted One preach,
Some will be found to understand."

Warren.

Then the Buddha, having compassion on all living beings, gazed over the world, and saw people of every variety : some having but little moral defilement, some having great moral defilement, some of keen faculties, and some of dull faculties, some of good disposition, some of bad disposition, some that were docile, some that were not, and some who saw the terrors of the hereafter and of blameworthy actions, like unto the lotuses of a pond, some of the blossoms which have sprung up do not reach the surface but grow under water ; some of the blossoms which have sprung up and grown in the water are even with the surface of the water ; and some of the blossoms which shoot up above the water and are not touched by the water. Then the Exalted One addressed Brahmá in the following stanza :

“Wide open the door to the Immortal,
To those who wish to hear with faith.
The Dhamma sweet and good I spake not,
Despairing of the weary task.

Then Brahmá delighted that his request has been granted, saluting the Blessed One, straightway disappeared. Then the Blessed One thought “To whom shall this Doctrine be preached first, who will understand this Doctrine easily? What, if I were to preach the Doctrine to the band of the five Bhikkhus?” And by the power of His divine clear vision surpassing that of men, He saw that the five Bhikkhus were living at the Deer Park, Isipatana, Benares. And the Blessed One leaving Uruvela, started to go to Benares, and on the way, between the Bodhi tree and Gaya, He met Upaka, a naked ascetic of the Ajivaka sect, and when he saw Him, he said to the Blessed One “Your countenance, friend, is serene, your complexion is pure and bright. In whose name have you retired from the world? Who is your teacher? What Doctrine do you profess?” And the Blessed One answered :—

“I have overcome all foes,
I am all-wise,
I am free from all stains in every way,
I have left everything, and have obtained emancipation
By the destruction of desire.
Having myself gained knowledge,
Whom should I call my master?
I have no teacher, no one is equal to me.
I am the holy one in this world,
In the world of gods and men no being is like me.
I am the highest teacher,
I alone am the supreme Buddha,
I have gained peace, all passions are extinguished,
I have obtained Nibbana.
To establish the reign of the Law of supreme Truth
I go to the city of Kasi.
There I will beat the drum of the Immortal
In the darkness of this world.”

Upaka then replied “You profess, friend, to be the holy absolute Conqueror.

And the Buddha said "Like all Jinas, who have reached the extinction of all depraved desires, I have overcome all states of evil, therefore Upaka, a Conqueror I am." Then the Blessed One wandering from place to place came to Benares, to the Deer Park, Isipatana, to where the band of five Bhikkhus was. Seeing the Blessed One coming from afar, they concerted with each other saying, "Friends, there comes the Samana Gotama, who lives in abundance, who has abandoned his exertions, and is now living in luxury. Let us not salute him nor rise from our seats, nor take his bowl and his robe from his hands, but let us put there a seat, if he likes, let him sit down." But when the Blessed One gradually approached near unto them they could not keep to their agreement, they went forth to meet Him, took His bowl and His robe, prepared a seat, brought water for washing His feet. Then the Blessed One sat down on the seat and washed His feet. Now they addressed the Blessed One by His name, and with the appellation "Friend."

Then the Blessed One spoke to them : "Do not address Oh ! Bhikkhus, the Tathágata by name, and with the appellation "Friend." The Tathágata is the holy supreme Buddha. Listen to the Immortal Doctrine He has gained. I will teach you, I will preach to you the Doctrine. If you walk in the way I show you, you will in this life, realise the Truth, having yourselves known it and seen it face to face, and you will live in the possession of that highest goal of the holy life, for the sake of which youths of noble family fully renounce the world and go forth into the homeless state."

Then the Bhikkhus said to the Blessed One : "By those observances, friend Gotama, by those practices, by those austerities, you have not been able to obtain power surpassing that of men, nor the superiority of full and holy knowledge and insight. How will you now, living in luxury, having given up your exertions, having turned into an easy life, be able to obtain power surpassing that of men, and the superiority of full and holy knowledge and insight ?"

Then the Blessed One said to the Bhikkhus, "The Tathágata does not live in luxury, he has not given up exertion, he has not turned to a life of luxury. The Tathágata is the holy supreme Buddha. Give ear, O Bhikkhus, the Ambrosia has been won. I will teach you, I will preach the Doctrine to you," etc. Failing to convince them the Blessed One said : "Do you admit, O Bhikkhus, that I have never spoken to you in this way before this ?" "You have never spoken so, Lord ;"

and the Blessed One spoke : "The Tathágata is the holy supreme Buddha, give ear O Bhikkhus," etc. And the Blessed One thus addressed the band of five Bhikkhus. "There are two extremes, O Bhikkhus, which the one who has given up home, ought to avoid. What are the two extremes ? A life given to sensual pleasure (Káma yoga), which is low, vulgar, earthly, ignoble and profitless ; and a life of asceticism, which is painful, ignoble and unprofitable. Avoiding the two extremes, the Tathágata has gained the knowledge of the middle path, which leads to insight, to wisdom, to peace, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbána."

"Which, O Bhikkhus is the Middle Path (Majjhima Patipadá) that leads to Nibbána ? It is the noble eight-fold path, *viz* :—

Sammāditthi.—Right realization of the four noble Truths and of the law of Causes and Effects (Karma and Rebirth, etc.).

Samma Sankappo.—Right thoughts of love, of compassion, and of renunciation of lustful pleasures engendering self-love.

Samma Vaca.—Right speech ; abstaining from falsehood, slander, harsh words and gossip, and speaking words of truth, gentleness and concord.

Samma Kammanto.—Right action, abstaining from destroying life, stealing, and sensual indulgence.

Samma Vayvo. Right means of livelihood—abstaining from slavery, from selling animals for food, from selling intoxicants, and poisons, and murderous weapons.

Samma Vayamo.—Right exertion : to prevent evil arising, to eradicate evil already arisen, to generate meritorious deeds, to increase and develop meritorious deeds already arisen.

Sama Sati.—Right mindfulness, biological analysis of the constituents of the body, analysis of sensations, analysis of the metabolism of ideations ; analysis of the five obstacles of conscious concentration ; analysis of the five skhandhas ; analysis of the six seats of consciousness.

Sammasamadhi.—Right realisation of the four Jhanas (Dhyanas) and living in a cheerfully conscious state of perfect equanimity. In this state, the yogi is able to acquire the six mystical powers of the divine hearing, divine sight, to look to the past for many millions of births, to read the thoughts of gods and men, to work phenomena or "miracles," and of the science that gives powers to realise consciously that he shall be reborn no more."

This is the middle path which the Buddha discovered after He had realised the operation of the great Law of Dependent Causation ; the safe path that leads to Nibbana, the heaven of conscious rest. And the four noble Truths that we have to realise are :—

The existence of Pain (dukkha) ; Birth is painful, decay is painful, illness is painful, death is painful, presence of objects that we dislike is painful, separation from objects that we love is painful, not to obtain what we like is painful, clinging to the five elements of existence is painful.

The cause of pain.—Egoistic desires that lead to rebirth, *viz.* desire for sense pleasure ; desire for celestial pleasure ; desire for personal annihilation.

The Cessation of pain.—Destruction of Ignorance and egoistic desires (Tanha) leads to the cessation of pain, which is Nibbana.

The sublime way.—The noble eightfold Path as enumerated above. “As long, O Bhikkhus, as I did not possess with perfect purity this true knowledge and insight into these four noble truths, so long I knew that I had not obtained the highest perfect enlightenment in the world of gods and men, but since I possessed with perfect purity this true knowledge and insight into these four noble Truths (Arya satyas), then I knew, O Bhikkhus, that I had obtained the highest wisdom in the universe and this emancipation cannot be lost. This is my last birth, no more shall I be born again.”

Thus the Blessed spoke, and the five Bhikkhus were delighted, and the first to obtain the “eye of Truth” was the Brahman Kondanna.

Thus in that moment, in that instant, the joyous shouts of the gods reached the highest heavens, and ten thousand worlds were bathed in a flood of light surpassing the radiance of the gods.

The noble eightfold Path is the only path of eternal progress and the spiritual student who walks in that path has to think incessantly of the three characteristic signs immutable in the cosmic process ; *viz.* that everything in the universe is breaking up with radio-active rapidity ; that there is pain eventually caused by this disintegration ; and that there is no permanent ego or an “I am ness” in anything which we foolishly call “mine.” The continual reflection of these characteristics moulds the mind to forget one's

self, and stimulates the mind for positive ethical virtues of self-abnegation, preferring others to one's self. Buddhist ethics may therefore be called disinterested æsthetic ethics.

The Propagation of the Dharma.

AFTER the end of the rainy season the Blessed One summoning His sixty Bhikkhus said : -

"O Bhikkhus, I am delivered from all fetters, human and divine. You, O Bhikkhus, are also delivered from all fetters, human and divine. Go ye now, O Bhikkhus, and wander for the gain of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain and for the welfare of gods and men. Preach the Doctrine glorious. Proclaim a consummate, perfect and pure life of holiness (Brahmacharya). There are beings whose mental eyes are covered by scarcely any dust, but if the doctrine is not preached to them they cannot attain salvation. They will understand the Doctrine." (Rhys Davids.)

From this time henceforth, for forty five years, the Tathagata went from place to place preaching the Dhamma to the people of the Gangetic valley, watered by the Ganges and the Jamuna, the sacred land of the Buddhas. Kings and ministers were objects of compassion to Him equally with the poor and the rich. The abandoned woman and the leper were also objects of His tender solicitude. Only words of loving kindness went forth from His lips, and the melodious vibrating voice of the Lord is likened unto the sweet warbling of the Himalayan kuravika bird, so that even animals loved to listen to the Buddha's voice. Whatever He uttered, was only for the welfare and happiness of the many. Never an angry word went out from Him, the Lord of Compassion absolute, whose mission was "to bring happiness to the world, and born to save mankind." At dawn, every morning, He sends forth the rays of His all-pervading love to every habitable world, and seeks the person who is destined to hear the Good Law from Him, who is the Lord of Mercy. The middle country of India was the favoured land of our Lord, it is from this land that His love radiated to the ten quarters of the universe. By His supreme wisdom, by His absolute love, by the power of His own omniscience He was the acknowledged Leader of Brahmas, Devas and men. He was the God of Holiness—the *Visuddhi deva*. He appeared at a time when the world was waiting for a great

Light, and India was then in the zenith of her greatness, and even Greece at that period had not produced a Socrates. "Stars" had appeared in other lands, but the "Sun of spiritual illumination" was the Buddha, by the radiance of whose Wisdom the worlds receive light. From His golden coloured body rays of radiant blue, yellow, red, white, go forth as messengers to announce that the Buddha is coming, and people await in eagerness to receive the Blessed One in their homes. To know little of the absolute nature of the Tathágata, one should read the sacred Suttas of the Páli texts which are called the three Pitakas—the Vinaya Pitaka, the Sutta Pitaka and the Abhi-dhamma Pitaka. The Vinaya Pitaka contains five books :—

Bhikkhu Vibhanga, Bhikkhuni Vibhanga, Maha-vagga, Culla-vagga and Parivara-patha.

The Sutta Pitaka contains the following books :—

Digha Nikaya, Majjhima Nikaya, Samyutta Nikaya and Anguttara Nikaya.

Khuddaka Nikaya, which consists of the following books,
viz :—

Khuddaka-patha, Dhammapadam, Udanam, Itivuttakam, Sutta Nipata, Vimana-vatthu, Peta-vatthu, Thera-gatha, Theri-gatha, Jataha, Niddesa, Patisambhida-magga, Apadana, Buddha-vamsa and Cariya Pitaka.

The Abhi-Dhamma contains the following books :—

Dhamma Sangani, Vibhanga, Katha-vatthu, Puggala-pannatti, Dhatu katha, Yamaka and Patthana.

These texts with their commentaries and subcommentaries written in Pali are to be found in the temple libraries of Ceylon, Burma and Siam, and at present the London Páli Text Society, founded by the well-known scholar, Dr. Rhys Davids, is publishing the Páli texts in Roman character, since 1882, and a few years hence the whole collection of the Páli texts will be available for European Páli scholars. This voluminous literature is condensed in one Gathá :—

Sabba Papessa Akaranam.
Kusalassa Upasampada.
Sacitta Pariyo Dapanam.
Etam Buddhannussanam.

Abstain from doing evil, ceaselessly do good, keep the heart clean. This is the exhortation of the Buddhas.

The Nibbána Dhamma is again categorised under the thirty-seven principles of the *Bodhi Pakkya Dhamma*, which are as follows :—

1. The four states of analysis Sati Patthánas which are included in the seventh principle of the eight-fold path.

2. The four Iddhipáda conditions necessary for the acquirement of psychical faculties, *viz.*, the desire for development, the necessary exertion, purifying the heart, and self-analysis.

3. The four strenuous exertions Sammappadhánas included in the sixth principle of the eight-fold path.

4. The five Indriyas or the organs of spirituality, *viz.*, faith acquired by the study of the psychical science in the Páli texts ; the power of attentiveness by a special process of training the mind and the body ; exertion as above ; acquirement of the wisdom leading to Nibbána ; development of Samádhi.

5. The five Balas or the powers of spirituality, (same as above).

6. The seven principles of wisdom (Bojjhanga). Eternal watchfulness by the practice of the analysing process. Study of the essentials of the teachings enumerated in the different categories of the Buddha's teachings. Development of the spirit of cheerfulness by æsthetic habits ; exertion to progress in the higher path. Mental equilibrium not letting it go to unlimited ecstasy nor into melancholia ; development of the power of concentration in the practice of Samádhi. Perfect equanimity uninfluenced by the four biases, *viz.*, partiality, anger, fear, infatuation.

7. The noble eight-fold path as enumerated above.

The God Idea in Buddhism.

In the Kevadda sutta, of the Digha nikaya, the Buddha exhorted a wealthy young man of a noble family of Nálándá who had approached the Buddha with a request that a miracle working Bhikkhu should be deputed to work miracles for the conversion of the rich people of the wealthy town of Nálándá. The Buddha told him that there were three methods of converting the people which He himself had realized, *viz.*, by means of Iddhi patiháriyám, exhibition of miracles ; Adesaná patiháriyám, mental telepathy ; Anusásaná patiháriyám, moral exhortation ; that although

He can perform miracles and read the thought of others and make them believe the doctrine, yet He prefers to adopt the more sober method of exhortation by appealing to Truth, for it is more lasting than the other two methods, because certain magicians, who have mastered the *gandhāri vijjā* and *mani vijjā*, are able by magic to show wonders, and therefore Truth is more valuable than working miracles. He exemplified by relating the story of a certain Bhikkhu, who had the *iddhi* power to go to the heavens of the gods as well as to the higher heaven of *Brahmā*. A Bhikkhu once in a state of *dhyāna* got the idea into his head to find out where the four elements, earth, water, fire, and air will absolutely cease. Not being able to solve the problem himself, he went by the power of *iddhi* to the four guardian gods of the world and asked them to answer the question where the four elements would cease absolutely? The gods answered, that they were not competent to solve it, and asked the Bhikkhu to go to Sakka or Indra. He went and asked Indra to answer the question, but Indra referred him to the higher gods, and from one heaven he went up to the heaven above, and in each heaven he was referred to the gods of the higher heaven, and at last the Bhikkhu came to the heaven of *Brahmā*. When he entered the *Brahmā's* hall, he found the gods of the retinue of *Brahmā*, who had come to pay homage to *Brahmā*. The Bhikkhu asked those assembled to answer his question, where the four elements would cease absolutely, and the gods replied that in as much as *Brahmā* himself was expected shortly to arrive, and the glory of *Brahmā* was visible, he had better wait for the *Brahmā* himself. In a little while the *Brahmā* came and took his seat in the chief place allotted to him. The Bhikkhu addressing *Brahmā* said that he had come to ask the question where the four elements, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element ceased absolutely? *Brahmā* was in a fix, he said to himself,—here is this fellow come with a question, and I am sure I do not know, but then it is not proper for me to exhibit my ignorance, for this retinue of mine, all have the belief that I am the Creator, and it would not be well for me to say that I do not know, so I must adopt the art of evading him by telling him something else, and then he began “I am *Brahmā*, Great *Brahmā*, the Supreme Being, the Unsurpassed, the Perceiver of all things, the Controller, the Lord of all, the Maker, the Fashioner, the Chief, the Victor, the Ruler, the Father of all Beings, who have been and are to be.” Then the Bhikkhu said, “I do not

want to know what you are, but I do want to know where the four elements cease absolutely." Again the Brahmá repeated the string of his names. Again the Bhikkhu said that he did not want to know what Brahmá was, but that he was very anxious to know about the cessation of the four elements, and the third time the Brahmá, having got up from his seat, came to the place where the priest was, and taking him by the arm, took him aside, and spake to the Bhikkhu as follows : "Look here, these gods of my heaven believe that Brahmá sees all things, knows all things, has penetrated all things, and I did not want to confess my ignorance before them, but the fact is, I really am myself ignorant about the cessation of the four elements. But you have done evil in coming to me leaving the Buddha. Go to the Blessed One and ask Him to explain this question to you, and as He will explain, so believe." And the Bhikkhu then by the power of iddhi leaving the world of Brahmá appeared before the Blessed One and asked Him the question, where the four elements, earth, water, fire and air would absolutely cease. And the Blessed One told the Bhikkhu, that that question ought never to have been put thus "where do these elements, earth, water, fire and air shall utterly cease ;" but this was how the question should have been put :—

O where doth water, where doth earth
And fire and wind no footing find ?
And where doth long and where doth short
And fine and coarse and good and bad,
And where do name and form both cease
And turn to utter nothingness ?

And the answer is :—

In consciousness Invisible
And Infinite of Radiance bright,
O ! there doth water, there doth earth,
And fire and wind no footing find"

— *Warren.*

The Tolerant Spirit of Buddhism.

BUDDHISM not having either the dogmatics or the metaphysics of theology, the mainstay of priestly hierarchies, has not the elements of discord in it, neither do we find therein contradictions that a higher criticism can condemn. It

avoids inquiries into the speculations of the *Whence, Whither,* and *What* am I ; and deals with such questions as will be conducive to help the moral and spiritual development of man. It appeals to man's reason and to his own purified conscience, dealing only with the broadest principles of eclecticism. It inculcates the highest virtues of mercy, uprightness, purity of life, truthfulness, gentleness of speech, freedom from malice, temperance, charity, non-covetousness, universal love, and rationalistic thought as absolutely essential for the development of human character. In the non-essentials of mere belief, Buddhism is silent, but it insists on the essentials of those principles which are positively necessary for the welfare and happiness of mankind. Intolerance and the spirit of persecution are foreign to Buddhism. In the triumphant march of the Buddhist propagandists, since the day that the merciful Buddha began His holy mission of converting man by the wisdom of His all-redeeming love, there never has been any blood-shed on His account and for His sake. Buddhism appeals to man's analytical faculties to investigate into the Truth, and to do nothing that will give pain to others. That has been the shibboleth of Buddhism. The Buddha taught His disciples never to show anger nor bear malice if outsiders spoke against Him. The spirit of tolerance shown by the great Teacher found a re-echoing in the Buddhist Emperor Asoka, who, two hundred years after the Nirvana, carried out the Master's teachings in their fulness and exemplified the same by the supreme nobleness of his exalted nature, and in whose reign, India rose to the zenith of her prosperity, and stood as a beacon light holding the torch of human freedom for the enlightenment of the whole world. Having made Buddhism the State-religion, he, by his genius, became its propagandist, by issuing a series of edicts, which he caused to be engraved in huge boulders in different parts of his extensive empire. These edicts, discovered after an oblivion of more than two thousand years, and identified and translated from an archaic language into modern English by eminent European oriental scholars, show the spirit of tolerance of the Buddha's religion of love and wisdom. Of the Edicts, the 12th edict, now known as the Toleration edict, contains the most wholesome advice that a gracious sovereign, who loves to call himself "the father of his people," can impart to a free and independent nation. The edict was discovered several years ago in the village of Sháhbazgarhi in the Yusufzai country in the Frontier Province, and

the rock whereon it was engraved measures 24 feet long and 10 feet high. Two copies of it have been found, one written in the Brahmi alphabet, the other in the Aramic or Kharosti character, written from right to left. This edict has been translated by Bühler and Senart and is embodied in the monograph entitled "Asoka the Buddhist Emperor" by Vincent Smith. It is good to hear what the great Emperor had to say 2,200 years ago to the people of India. Who will say that it is not applicable to-day ?

"His Majesty, King Priyadarsin does reverence to men of all creeds, whether ascetics or householders by donations and various modes of reverence. His Majesty, however, cares not so much for donations or external reverence as that there should be a growth of the essence of the matter in all creeds. The growth of the essence of the matter assumes various forms, but the root of it is moderation of speech, to wit, a man must not do reverence to his own sect by disparaging that of another man for trivial reasons. Depreciation should be for adequate reasons only, because the sects of other people deserve reverence for one reason or another. By thus acting a man exalts his own sect, and at the same time does service to the sects of other people. By acting contrariwise, a man hurts his own sect, and does disservice to the sects of other people. For he who does reverence to his own sect, while disparaging all other sects from a feeling of attachment to his own, on the supposition that he thus glorifies his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts severe injury on his own sect. *Therefore peace alone is good, so that all should hear and list & gladly to the opinions of others.....*"

"Everywhere in the Empire of His Majesty Devanampriya are to be found hospitals for men and animals, on the roads, trees have been planted, wells have been dug for the use of man and beast ; Commissioners appointed to proclaim the elevating Dharma ; obedience to parents, liberality to friends, relatives, Brahmans, Samanas, humanity to animals, avoidance of extravagance and violence of language ; the sound of the drum of righteousness is heard ; heavenly spectacles of processional cars, elephants, illuminations are displayed to the people ; Officers appointed to look after the welfare and happiness of soldiers, of Brahmans, of rich and poor, of the aged ; to prevent wrongful imprisonment and chastisement ; to consider cases where a man has a large family, or has been smitten by calamity, or is advanced in years."

BUDDHISM.*--(2nd Paper.)*(Translation)*

The Southern school.

BY

BHIKSHU PUNNANANDA.

Introduction.

Buddhism is so lofty, so profound and so complex a religion that it is almost impossible to explain it within so short a period as has been allotted to each subject : a general treatment also of the subject will not be interesting to the public. In my paper I propose therefore to deal only with the principal tenets of Buddhism. The public, I hope, will kindly excuse me for my inability to enter into the philosophy of Buddhism owing to shortness of time.

Origin of Buddhism.

Before explaining Buddhism, I should like to speak a few words as to its origin. At the present age, *Tathagata*, the Buddha, founded this *Dharma* (religion). In the 7th century B. C. there reigned Suddhodhana, a highly virtuous king in Kapilavastu at the foot of the Himalayas, under the kingdom of Nepal. He belonged to a branch of the Solar race. There was peace and happiness everywhere in his kingdom, under his good administration. The name of his first wife was Māyā who was exquisitely beautiful as well as chaste and virtuous. The king Suddhodhana enjoyed his kingdom with his first wife for a long time. The only want they had was that of a child. Both the king and the queen were praying earnestly for a child : but their prayers were not yet fulfilled. In course of time the queen attained the age of 44 : but there was no symptom of her giving birth to a child. At length, at the age of 45, she gave birth to a son adorned with the 32 characteristic signs of a Great Being. The name of Siddhārtha was given to him. Being desirous of knowing the future of the child, the king sent for seven renowned soothsayers of the

* The original, in vernacular, will be found in the Appendix.

time. Six of them prognosticated that the prince would become either a universal monarch or a Buddha, according as he lived a householder's life or forsook it. Kaundán̄ya, the seventh and the youngest of them, however, predicted that it would be impossible for him to live a householder's life but that he was sure to become a Buddha, the enlightened. Suddhodhana asked him with great anxiety "what will make the prince lead a householder's life?" In reply Kaundán̄ya said that four ominous sights would move the prince to shun worldly enjoyments—an old man, a sick man, a corpse and a monk. The king took every precaution against such sights meeting the eyes of Siddhártha. From his very childhood he was by nature indifferent to worldly enjoyments and his non-attachment increased with age. The king took to various means to divert his mind to pleasures of enjoyments and accordingly built beautiful palaces and garden-houses for his residence, suitable for three seasons, summer, winter and the rainy : beautiful female servants were engaged to wait upon the prince and to accomplish the household duties of the palaces : the pleasure-houses always resounded with the sound of sweet songs and the dance of songstresses and dancing girls who equalled the nymphs of heaven in their voices. The king married him to a beautiful girl named Gopá whose beauty, loving care and attention served, for some time, to keep the mind of the prince attached to worldly enjoyments. But this was merely like a sand dam before the gushing torrents of non-attachment ; for how was it possible for one to keep attached to worldly pleasures, who came down to this earth to dispel ignorance and to bring salvation to mankind, suffering from birth, old age, sickness and death ? After a while, he again felt disgusted with the life of enjoyments and luxury and expressed his desire to go outside the pleasure-garden and asked for his father's permission. The king adopted every means to bind him to this world and so he did not like to allow his son to go outside the pleasure-garden, lest he should meet with those ominous signs—sights of the decrepit, the sick &c., neither did he like to disregard the prayer of the prince as he might be distressed in mind. The king made every arrangement to prevent the old, and the sick &c. from coming in the way, through which the prince was to pass and decorated it with foliage and flags.

Siddhartha with his charioteer Chhandak went out for a drive in the city, in his chariot and went on, enjoying the

natural beauties of *Kapilavastec*. But inspite of all the precautions of the king and the citizens, an old man bent with age, came leaning on his stick, in front of the prince with trembling steps. The prince was struck with wonder at this strange sight and inquired of the charioteer who that man was. The charioteer replied 'This is an old man, O prince!'. 'Is old age inherent to his family' asked the prince, 'or is it only he who has become old?' The charioteer replied "It is not only he who is *seized* with old age nor is it inherent to his family alone, but all beings are doomed to fall into to the *jaws* of old age—Yourself, the princess Yasodhara and all others are destined to fall a victim to it : all valour, strength and beauty will vanish and even the very body will be felt burdensome". Having heard these from the charioteer the prince was very much frightened and did not proceed further on that day, but came back with a heavy heart. Having learnt of the untimely return of the prince, the king anxiously asked the reason of it. On the charioteer explaining it to him, his anxiety increased and the king took greater precautions against such sights attracting his attention in future and resorted to various means to divert the attention of the prince. After a few days, Siddhartha again went out for sight-seeing in the city, but inspite of all the precautions of the king and the citizens this time too, he met with a sick man suffering from pangs of illness. On two other occasions he met with a corpse as stiff as wood, and a recluse, calm and tranquil. These sights clearly convinced him that the world was transitory and an aggregate of sorrows, that there was not the smallest trace of happiness in the world and that it is only through ignorance that people take sorrow for happiness. As a man fatigued and thirsty follows the mirage, taking it to be water, so does a man, through mere ignorance, follow the desires in the hope of getting real happiness. This world appeared to him (the prince) like a *Smasana* (cremation ground), full of grim objects and the fire of sorrow seemed to spread quickly on all sides, with tongues of flames ready to consume the whole earth. He could not preserve the calmness of his mind : He at once resolved to think out a solution of how to escape from the hand of sorrow and at last made up his mind to renounce the world. This he did, leaving behind him, his old father, his beloved wife and a new born child and he at last discovered the means for the liberation from sorrow. At that time there were many distinguished Rishis living in India, attended with many disciples. The chief amongst them, were Rudraka, son of

Rama and Aradakalama, the follower of the Sankhya system. Siddhartha went to each of them in turn and began to practice meditation. Within a very short time he acquired thoroughly what they taught ; but this failed to show him the true means for the liberation from sorrow and finding none superior to them in learning and spirituality, he at last made up his mind to find out for himself the means of emancipation from sorrow by the strength of his own wisdom (insight).

Self-mortification :—Accordingly he went to Buddha-Gaya and sat down in deep meditation under the Bodhi tree. His penances began to be more and more rigid and gradually he diminished the quantity of his food so much that he would take only a handful of jujube in a week ; but this broke down his health completely and he was reduced to skeleton and his power of thinking declined—but all the same, his longed-for object remained unfulfilled—the object for which he had undergone hard penances and self-mortification. He at last came to the conclusion that it was not by rigid penances and self-mortification, but by following the middle path, that one could attain salvation (Nirvana). Accordingly he resumed his former diet by begging and on the full-moon day of Vaishákh, after having taken the milk-rice offered by Sujátá, he sank in deep meditation under the Bo-tree and that very day attained omniscience and put an end to sorrow by a full comprehension of the Four Noble Truths. Siddhártha attained omniscience (Buddhanood) in B.C. 588 on the fullmoon day of Vaishakh and attained *Mahaparinirvana* (passing away) in 543 B.C., after preaching the Four Noble truths for fortyfive years.

The middle path :—He attained omniscience not by rigid penances and self-mortification, but by following the middle path. Hence he addressed The Pancha Vaggiya Bhikkhus (the 1st five disciples) in the following terms, at the time of preaching the “Dhamma Chakka Pavattana Suttan.”
“Dveme Bhikkhave anta pabbajitena na sevitaṭṭha. Katame dve ? Yo chāyāṃ kāmesu kāmāsukhallikānuyogohiṇo gammō pothujjaniko anariyo anattasamhito. Yo chāyāṃ attakilamathānuyogo dukkho anariyo anattasamhito. Etekhō ubho ante anupagamma majjima patipadā Tathāgotena abhisambudha chakkhukarāṇi, ñānakarāṇi, upasamaya, abhiññāya, samboḍhāya Nibbānāya samvattati.”

It means this :—Attachment and clinging to the pleasures of the senses and mortification of the body are the two extremes which should not be resorted to by one who has relinquished the world ; for the former is low, vulgar, pleasing

to the ignorants, ignoble and profitless and the latter is painful, ignoble and not beneficial. By not choosing these extremes the Middle Path has been transcendently known by Tathágata, to be productive of insight, productive of knowledge and conducive to the attainment of tranquility, transcendentalism, perfect knowledge and Nirvána. This Middle Path is the same as the Noble Eight-fold Path or the Four Noble Truths. These Four Noble Truths form the basis of Buddhism or *Saddhamma*, from a of knowledge which Siddhartha became Buddha and by preaching them he delivered innumerable men from sorrow. They are amplified in the Tripitaka and cover all Buddhist philosophy and mental and moral science.

Buddha was strictly a dissector of doctrine and disparager of bigotry, that is, he used always to investigate into the rationality of a doctrine before accepting it. "Accept not," he said, "what is unreasonable, be it the word of a *Thera*, or a *Samgha*, nay that of any Buddha; do not accept him who preaches unreasonable doctrines, though he is declared to be a Buddha." Hence the Four Noble Truths are to be accepted as true not because they are the sayings of the Buddha, but because they have satisfied reason and have been experienced by the eye of wisdom *i. g.* by Buddha himself who taught on the principle "Example is better than precept."

Explanation of the four Noble Truths.

I shall try to explain the four noble truths as concisely as possible, for to deal with them in detail means the elucidation of the whole Tripitaka and that would take a long time. So I propose to give only the purport of what Buddha taught, without quoting more original Pali. These are (1) suffering (2) the cause of suffering (3) the cessation of suffering and (4) the way to the cessation of suffering.

1. *Suffering*—birth, old age, sickness, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, despondency, detachment from things loveable, attachment to things unloveable, non-attainment of desired object—in brief, the five groups (*skandhas*) that constitute a body are sufferings. These are the necessary elements of existence. These sufferings are not everlasting, nor do they spring up without cause.

Every man of this world is born to suffer. To be born is to suffer. To see with the eye of wisdom, there is no

happiness in the world but only woe and suffering. What appears to be happiness through ignorance, is nothing but sorrow in reality. What again gives happiness for the present serves as a cause of suffering in its transformation. These sufferings are, however, not everlasting nor do they spring up without cause.

Hence 2) *the cause of suffering*—is desire, for it is the cause of birth, old age and other sufferings. It arises again and again and gives the people boundless sufferings. Desire begets longing for a dear object and that being satisfied, a feeling of happiness seems to arise for a moment : but the apparent happiness at the fulfilment of desires soon turns into a cause of suffering in its transformation. But one who is free from desire, has no such longing and consequently no suffering.

Desire (Tanhá) again, is of three kinds :—

- (i) Kama tanhá (rupa, rasa, sabda, gandha, sparsa) *e. g.* desire to see a beautiful form, to taste sweet flavour, to hear a sweet sound, to smell sweet odour, to enjoy soft touch—can be easily felt.
- (ii) Bháva tanhá (desire for existence) arises from the belief that the world is eternal.
- (iii) Vibháva tanhá (desire for extinction) arises from the belief that all things are perishable.

The Cessation of Kama tanhá is comparatively easier, but very difficult are the destructions of Buava tanhá and Vibhavanhá.

So has Buddha said of the cause of existence.

Ignorance is the cause of physical and intellectual manifestation.

Physical and intellectual *manifestation* are the causes of consciousness.

Consciousness is the cause of Name and Form.

Name and Form are the causes of the six organs of senses.

The six Organs of Senses are the causes of contact.

Contact is the cause of Sensation.

Sensation is the cause of Desire.

Desire is the cause of Existence.

Existence is the cause of Birth, Old age, Sickness, Death, Grief, Pain, Lamentation &c.

Thus arise sufferings. This chain is called *Paticca Samuppada*. "*Yam kinchi Samudayadhammam sabbantam nirodhadhammam*" i.e. whatever has origin, has an end. It has been proved above that every suffering has an origin and so, must have an end. This end is called *Nirodha* (cessation).

3. What is the cessation of suffering ?

"*Yo tassāyeva tanhāya asesā virāgaṇirodho chāgo patinissāggo mutti andhāyo idamuchati dukkhanirodham ariyasacham*" i.e. the complete destruction of desire is the cessation of suffering. "*Samudayanirodhenā dukkhanirodho, Samudayanirodhenā hi dukkham nirujjhati, na aññatha.*" Desire being the cause of suffering its destruction is the cessation of suffering. There is no other way for it.

Yāthahi mule anupaddave dalhe

Chhinnopi rukkho punadeva ruhati.

Evampi tanhānusaye anuhate

Nibbattati dukkhanidam punappunanti.

As the tree cut down, without being completely rooted out, grows again, so does sorrow come again and again, if desire (which is the root of sorrow) is not completely destroyed. In the spiritual sense, *Nirvāna* is called the "Cessation of suffering", for the attainment of *Nirvāna* is the destruction of desire. *Nirvāna* is the highest blessing and the best repose. It is not impossible in the sense that horn is impossible in the case of a hare, but may be obtained by following the proper course.

"*Atihi Bhikkhave ajātam abhutam asankhatam*"; *Nirvāna* has no origin, and it is non-existent and un-compounded. It has no creator : it is infinite and eternal ; it is permanent, a bliss, a happiness and an emancipation.

It has been shown in the *Paticca Samuppāda* that pre-dispositions &c. arise out of ignorance and other causes, hence their destruction necessitates the destruction of their causes.

Nirvāna is of two kinds. It has been said in Pali "*Dvemā Bhikkhave nibbānadhātuyo. Katamā dve ? Sa upādisesā cha nibbānadhatu, anupadi sesa cha nibbanadhatuti. Tattha purima kilesa nibbanam nāma. Pacchima khandanibbānam nāma.*" O, Bhikkhus, *Nirbānadhatu* is of two kinds. i. e.—viz., (1) *Sa upadishesa Nibbanadhatu and anupadishesa Nibbanadhatu.* The destruction of the ten Corruptions (*Kilesa*)

is *sa upadishesha* and that of the five *skandhas* is *anupadishesha Nirvāna*. The former may be obtained in this body and the latter after the destruction of the body.

(1) *Sa upadishesha Nirvāna* or Nirvana before the destruction of the five *skandhas* or the body :—When the mind of a man, while living, becomes free from sinfulness and his desires become vanquished, it becomes perfectly clear and faultless. In this state, the mind is calm and quiet like the sea undisturbed by the winds. It is said in the Mangala Suttam :—

*Phuttassa lokadhammehi chittam yassa na kampati,
Asokam virayam khemam etam magalamuttajanti.*

In this state, the mind remains unshaken in the midst of all sort of dualities such as gain or loss, fame or infamy, praise or blame, happiness or sorrow. It becomes free from grief, impurity and fear.

The characteristics of an Arhat have found expression in the following verse of Dhammapada :—

Santam tassa manam hoti
Santā vāchá cha kammañcha,
Sammadaññā vimuttassa
Upasantassa tādino.

Which means :—the mind, speech and action of an Arhat become tranquil.

It has been said in the Ratana Suttam about the state of an Arhat :—

Khinam purānam, navam natthi sambhavam,
Virattacittā áyatike bhavasmim ;
Tekhinabijā, abirulhi chhandā,
Nibbanti dhira yathayam padipo.

The old *samskaras* (reminiscences of past lives) of Arhats have been destroyed and no new ones are produced. They have no longing for future existence ; they have their desires and the cause of their existence destroyed. As is the case of the lamp when extinguished, so do they absolve themselves in the Anupadisesa-nibbana-element after the dissolution of their bodies. Desire, which is the cause of rebirth, ceases to exist in Arhats ; they die with calmness and quietitude on account of the absence of desires from their minds ; they do not undergo rebirth as in their case its cause is destroyed ; hence there is no death for them. They are not subject to old age ; they are immortal, eternal and infinite. This state is known as Anupadisesa Nibbana.

What is the way to obtain *Nibbān* ?

4. "*Katamancha Bhikkhave dukkha nirodhagāmini patipada* ? *Ayameva ariya attangika maggo. Sevyathidam sammaditthi, sammāsankappo, sammavādhā, sammakammanto, sammāadjivo, sammavayāmo, sammāsati, sammāsamādhi.*"

What is the way to the cessation of suffering ? The Noble Eightfold Path is the easiest and the best way to attain *Nibbāna*. The eight *angas* or steps of this Path viz., *Right View*, *Right life*, *Right Aspiration*, *Right Speech*, *Right Action*, *Right Effort*, *Right Memory*, and *Right Meditation*, are the eight courses of conduct, which must be observed by one desirous of attaining emancipation. However well-versed may one be in Buddhist scriptures, he cannot claim to be a true Buddhist unless he practices them in his actual life.

What is *Right View* ? The knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, that is, an insight into the truth which destroys ignorance is what constitutes *Right View*. It enables man to form correct ideas about everything and removes erroneous conceptions. The mind of a man enlightened with *Right View* is naturally devoted to thoughts concerning *naishkramya* (nekkhamma=absence of lust), *avyapada* (absence of anger) and *avihiṃsa* (absence of malice). It also enables man to distinguish the real from the unsubstantial, the eternal from the transitory, the Ego from the Non-Ego and happiness from misery. It leads to salvation and liberation from sorrow and destroys the influence of any false belief. It is the first step for the seekers after Nirvana to take. The light of *Right View* removes the darkness of ignorance and destroys the passions such as lust and other evil propensities and help men to attain Nirvana.

Aspiration concerning *naishkramya* &c. is called *Right Aspiration*. It is conducive to *Right View*, so it has been placed next to it. As the jeweller distinguishes good from bad jewels and pearls, so does the yogi with the help of *Right Aspiration* separate *Kamavachara Dharma* (thoughts concerning the Sensuous Universe) from *Rupavachara Dharma* (thoughts concerning the Universe of Form) and *Rupavachara Dharma* from *Arupavachara Dharma* (thoughts concerning the Universe of the Formless).

Those who are pure in aspiration do not and cannot commit the four kinds of sins of speech for they carefully examine their thoughts before they utter any word and also because their *vitarka* (conception) and *vicaro* (discursive thought) are pure. *Right Aspiration* is a great helper of

Right Speech and so it has been explained just after *Right aspiration*. Abstention from the four kinds of sins of speech is called *Right Speech*.

Those who are pure in view, aspiration and speech do not and cannot commit the three kinds of bodily sins for speech is generally followed by action. An action which does not make one commit the three kinds of bodily sins is called *Right Action*. It is impossible for those, who are free from the sins of the body and speech and who are engaged in doing meritorious deeds of body and speech, to live impure lives. Hence *Right Life* has been explained after *Right Speech* and *Right Action*. Purified life is called *Right Life*.

Thus after purifying speech, action and life, one, who has established himself well in *Sila* (conduct) cannot remain indifferent but begins to make great effort for destroying his slothfulness &c. This is *Right Exertion*. It destroys the sins already produced and prevents the committing of sins not yet begotten, begets good not yet produced and increases it manifold when once produced.

Purified memory is *Right Memory*. Mind purified and invested with pure memory concentrates itself on the object of meditation. This concentration of mind is called *Right Contemplation*. Mind purified and well established is conducive to contemplation, and hence it has been explained just after *Right Memory*. Thus with the mind pure, blameless and concentrated a yogi can acquire the knowledge of the cause of sorrow, the instability and non-egoism of all *Sankhāras* (things compounded) and thus destroying all his desires attains final emancipation.

The science of Buddhism can be divided into three broad divisions, *viz.*—*Sila* (conduct), *Samādhi* (meditation), *Paññā* (wisdom). All sins should be destroyed by conduct. A yogi must purify his conduct first and then practise meditation. He, with his mind concentrated will acquire wisdom, which will enable him to understand non-eternity and non-egoism of all *Sankhāras* (things compounded).

Once a lay disciple of Buddha wanted to know the whole of Buddhism in one verse. So, it was summarised in the following verse :—

Sabbapāpassa akaranam,
Kusalassa upasampadā,
Sachittapariyadapanam,
Etam Buddhāsasānam.

sabbapapassa akaranam (destruction of all sins) is *Sīla* (conduct), *kusalassa upasampadā* (doing meritorious deeds) is *Samādhi* (meditation) and *sacchittapariodāpanam* (purifying one's own heart) is *Prajñā* (wisdom).

The Noble Eightfold Path, too, can be grouped under the three following heads *viz.*, *Silakkhandha* (rules of conduct), *Samadhikkhandha* (rules of meditation), *Piññākkhandha* (rules of wisdom). Right Speech, Right Action, Right Life are together called *Silakkhandha*. Right Effort, Right Memory and Right Contemplation are together called *Samadhikkhandha*, and Right View and Right Aspiration are together called *Paññākkhandha*.

The Ethics of Buddhism.

I have explained Buddhism in brief. Now I am going to speak a few words on its ethics. It is a lofty religion and therefore demands the practice of lofty morals. One of the most remarkable features of Buddhism is, that it forbids the destruction of life and enjoins friendliness to all, kindliness to the distressed and sympathy for the poor.

Forbearance is another of its excellent preachings. I shall quote a few gāthās (verses) to show how lofty and universal its ethics is.

Nahi verena verāni sammaptidha kudachanam
Averena cha sammapti esa dhammo sanatano.—*Dhammapada*.

Enmities here (in this world) do never cease by enmity ; they are however destroyed by means of friendship ; this is an old doctrine.

Na tam kammam katan: Sādhu
Yam katva anutappati,
Yassa assumukho rodam
Vipākam patisevati.

It is not good to do that which is followed by repentance, and which makes (one) weep and brings tears to one's eyes.

Na bhaje pāpake mitte
Na bhaje purisādhame,
Bhajetha mitte kallyane
Bhajetha purisuttame.

One should not keep company with bad friends nor with persons who are despicable but serve virtuous friends and the best of men.

Akkodhena Jine kodham

Asādhum sādhuṇa Jine.

Jine kadariyam dānena

Sacchena alikavādinam.

One should overcome anger by forbearance, bad men by goodness, a miser by charity and a liar by truthfulness.

If such lofty and universal morals are observed everywhere there will be no hatred, no malice, no quarrel and other evils in this world ; and there would be nothing but happiness and peace in the world

SAMANA PUNNANANDA SAMI.

JAINISM.

1ST. PAPER—**Setambari.**

BY MUNNI MAHARAJ OF BENARES.

2ND. PAPER—**Degambari.**

(See Appendix.)

BRAHMOISM.

**The Spirit and Principles of the New
Dispensation.**

BY

PROF. BENOYENDRA NATH SEN.

As a believer in the New Dispensation I heartily welcome this Conference of Religions—the first of its kind held on the soil of India. While attending the International Congress of Liberal Religions which met at Geneva in 1905, the thought that was brought home to my mind most forcibly was, that if there was a land in the world fit to be the home of a Religious Congress organized upon a perfectly catholic and unsectarian basis, that land was India ! In the dispensation of Providence, India has been the holy meeting ground of all religions. Her interest in them is not simply metaphysical, but supremely practical. To her they are not merely speculative systems stored up in books, and collected from far and wide to satisfy the curiosity of the specialist, but they are all living facts, intimately and perhaps inextricably interwoven into her deepest life and thought. The Parliament of Religions which was held at Chicago fifteen years ago was a monument of America's enterprise, culture, and catholicity of spirit. But America's interest in Hinduism, or Buddhism, or Mahammadanism can at best be fitful and evanescent, confined only to the learned or the speculative few. But it is of the most vital importance to India that she should provide a steady and lasting medium

through which Hinduism and Buddhism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity and Islam can speak to one another, and make themselves understood, if not appreciated and accepted. For that we want an atmosphere of Light and Love,—intelligence to explain, intelligence to understand, and a thorough spirit of sympathy to welcome the truth, and make an allowance for differences. It is my earnest hope that this Conference will succeed in fulfilling its aim of giving us such a medium in such an atmosphere.

You will allow me, at the outset, to put in one word of explanation regarding the New Dispensation upon which you have done me the honour of inviting me to speak. The New Dispensation emphatically declares that it is not one more sect added to the numerous sects and denominations already existing,—because it claims essentially to be the religion of Harmony, the Dispensation which recognises the providential character of, and indeed is itself the fulfilment of, all other dispensations, in the fulness of time. It is not confined to any one country or people, its prophets are to be found in America and Europe as well as in India. Keshub Chunder Sen himself made only the modest claim of being one of its apostles ; though, as the Gospel which he preached comes to be more deeply appreciated, and the idea of the Church which he represented comes to be more fully realized, his own singular position in relation to both will, as a matter of course, become distinctly recognisable. Keshub Chunder Sen thus sets forth the object of the New Dispensation :

“It is the object of the New Dispensation :—

(1) To reconcile and harmonize the various systems of religion in the world.

(2) To make all churches in the East and the West one undivided and universal Church of God.

(3) To trace the unity of all Dispensations.

(4) To trace the line of logical succession among all the prophets in ancient and modern times.

(5) To reduce the truths of all scriptures to one eternal and unwritten scripture.

(6) To establish universal brotherhood by uprooting caste.

(7) To give a rational explanation of the symbolism

and the sacramentalism in which the ideas of great minds are fossilized.

(8) To construct the Science of Religion by adopting the comparative method."

As a further illustration of the attitude of the New Dispensation towards other religious dispensations and scriptures and prophets, I shall make a short extract from Keshub Chunder Sen's "New Samhita",—where the candidate for initiation has to answer certain questions put by the Minister :

Minister : Dost thou believe in the Church Universal, which is the deposit of all ancient wisdom and the receptacle of all modern science, which recognises in all prophets and saints a harmony, in all scriptures a unity and through all dispensations a continuity, which abjures all that separates and divides and always magnifies unity and peace, which harmonizes reason and faith, *yoga* and *bhakti*, asceticism and social duty in their highest forms, and which shall make of all nations and sects one kingdom and one family in the fulness of time ?

Candidate : Yes.

Minister : Dost thou believe in natural inspiration, general and special ? Dost thou believe in providence, general and special ?

Candidate : Yes.

Minister : Dost thou accept and revere the scriptures ?

Candidate : Yes, so far as they are records of the wisdom and devotion and piety of inspired geniuses and of the dealings of God's special providence in the salvation of nations, of which records only the spirit is God's but the letter man's.

Minister : Dost thou accept and revere the world's prophets and saints ?

Candidate : Yes, so far as they embody and reflect the different elements of Divine Character, and set forth the higher ideals of life for the instruction and sanctification of the world. I ought to revere and love and follow all that is divine in them, and try to assimilate it to my soul, making what is theirs and God's mine.

In the Town Hall address on "We Apostles of the New Dispensation", three distinct principles are set forth as the main characteristics of the New Dispensation, viz.,—(1)

Immediacy, (2) Synthetivity and Catholicity, and (3) Subjectivity. I will take these up one after another.

I. *Immediacy*. The first characteristic is Immediacy. On the negative side this means that the New Dispensation does not recognize any mediator between God and man—no infallible book, no infallible church, no infallible preceptor (*Guru*) or prophet or saviour. On the positive side it means the possibility of God-vision, of communion, and of direct inspiration.

The denial of human infallibility and of the literal infallibility of scriptures is the work of the scientific and critical spirit of the Age—which is its destructive side. The immediate consequence of such denial is the assertion of individualistic rationalism—the unrestrained and unlimited rights of the individual reason. The New Dispensation avoids the two extremes of the doctrine of verbal infallibility on the one hand, and the assertion of unqualified individualism in matters of religion on the other. It gives their proper place to scriptures and churches, and religious teachers and prophets. It believes in inspiration as a fact of life, and in divine providence as a reality. In the history of all nations there have been born, in accordance with the needs of the time, great religious geniuses whose souls have been touched with the divine light, and whose utterances have been full of divine inspiration. These are the world's prophets, and their utterances form the world's scriptures. The individual, if he desires to have the fullness of spiritual life within himself, cannot deny or cut himself off from this stream of light and life that has been flowing down from the heights of the past. He must approach it in a spirit of reverence, albeit of critical reverence, and try to understand and assimilate it not only in the light of the reason within himself, but in the light of the reason of the whole community which is the true and everlasting Church whose continuity is never broken, and which is the perpetual receptacle of the inspiration that is communicated to man. The New Dispensation thus believes in a Church,—which has all the characteristic marks of the church as conceived by the Church of Rome—unity, sanctity, inspired authority, catholicity—but which is no other than the whole community itself (the *Samaj* or *Sangha*) and which, with the progress of the unification of the race, will mean the whole of humanity. It believes in prophets as inspired spiritual geniuses, and it believes in scriptures “so far as they are records of the wisdom and devotion and piety of inspired geniuses and of

the dealings of God's special providence in the salvation of nations, of which records only the spirit is God's but the letter man's."

Immediacy is thus not the assertion of individualism in religion. At the same time the new Dispensation particularly emphasises the direct touch of the individual soul with the divine. It is a message of harmony to the world, but primarily and above all it is a gospel of salvation to the individual sinner. Its claim to the name of a "Dispensation" rests upon this very fact that it proclaims once more the truth of this intimate relationship between God and man. The preachers of this Dispensation have borne their personal testimony to the fact of that inner spiritual experience which they have described as "God-vision" and "hearing God"; and they have declared that there is nothing supernatural, or occult, or esoteric about this experience, but it is an experience that is open to every earnest, God-seeking and God-loving soul. It is not simply an intellectual conviction, or even intellectual realisation; but it is a soul-experience,—intellect, heart, and will acting together; it is the meeting between God seeking man and man seeking God; it is Love responding to Love. This experience is the basis of the simplest act of prayer, as well as of the deepest communion. It is progressive, and grows fuller, deeper and sweeter with spiritual culture. The full realization of this love is the attainment of the Highest in man,—the infinite and eternal Bliss. This is the simple doctrine of Prayer, and of Salvation taught by the New Dispensation.

II. *Syntheticity and Catholicity*: From the earliest times India has been synthetic and catholic in her spirit. She has not lost herself in the many, but has always sought the One in the many. And to her, the One has never been an exclusive or jealous God, a leader of hosts, a tribal or sectarian deity,—but the Spirit, the *Atman*, the Soul of each and all, pervading "all forms of all being."

सर्वभूतेषु यनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं बिद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता । १८ । २० ।

"That by means of which the one, undivided, eternal Spirit is realised through all the multiple forms of being is Spiritual Wisdom."

The spirit of this spiritual wisdom applied to the religious developments of the whole world is just the spirit

of the New Dispensation. It is the spirit "which recognizes in all prophets and saints a harmony, in all scriptures a unity and through all dispensations a continuity." This doctrine of harmony, however, I am afraid, is not without many practical difficulties.

In the first place, philosophically speaking, we have the new Science of Comparative Religion which owes its origin to the purely modern spirit of comparative study. The object here is to apply, in a spirit of rigorous scientific impartiality, the inductive and historical method to the study of religions, and draw conclusions with regard to the essentials and processes of development of that sociological phenomenon called religion. This study, amongst other results, has led, in the hands of many distinguished Western theologians, to an exposition of the evolution and development of religious faith and religious systems amongst various nations. The great world-religions have thus been placed side by side, and attempts have been made to explain their mutual relations, to trace their mutual connections, to place them under appropriate categories, and even, where possible, to trace a continuous course of evolution running through them. When these attempts are thoroughly successful, it will be an intellectual and scientific vindication of the spiritual faith in the continuity of the dispensations of Providence throughout the world.

In the next place, the revolutionizing phenomenon which the modern age has to face is the close contact into which the world's *religious Ideals* have been brought with one another by the progress of the unification of mankind. Nowhere is this phenomenon more striking than in India. The ideals of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam making a simultaneous appeal to the mind and soul of man—a momentous contact, or it may be, a clash of mighty forces that had so long, along their separate lines, dominated the life evolution of different sections of mankind. Will it be possible, would it be in harmony with the economy of Providence, to keep these streams of forces still separate in future? Or, must there be an intermingling, a mutual assimilation, leading on to the evolution of new ideals, the matured fruits of the old? The New Dispensation does not believe in uniformity, but it believes in unity in the midst of variety. So far as social customs, and religious ceremonials, and methods of worship, and forms of church organization are concerned, each community and nationality must go through

its own natural course of evolution. But so far as the highest ideals of life are concerned, the world's progress is towards a common culture for all humanity, and in the fulness of time, those ideals will no longer be Hindu or Christian, Buddhist or anything else, but the common possession of all ; and in this sense there will be one Universal Church, and all mankind will worship the same God in the same Temple.

III. *Subjectivity* : The reference to ideals brings me to the last distinguishing mark of the New Dispensation—its subjectivity. The Hindu mind has always been given to idealism, the New Dispensation is pre-eminently idealistic. To it, the world we live in, is essentially a *spiritual* world,—matter itself is nothing but a manifestation of spirit. The whole interpretation of the world and of life, therefore, depends upon the development of our spiritual consciousness. When the spiritual “vision and the faculty divine” is not opened, the whole world is a chaos. As the power of spiritual apprehension is developed, God becomes a reality, and all the personalities and phenomena in the religious evolution of mankind also become spiritual realities. The significance of this spiritual apprehension has specially to be remembered in connection with two characteristic teachings of the New Dispensation :

(1) *The Pilgrimage to Saints*. The cardinal principle involved in this is twofold : first, to take life's ideals not in the abstract, but as embodied in concrete personalities ; and secondly, to look upon these great historical personalities not as outward figures entombed in books, but as living facts of our spiritual consciousness. The New Dispensation never takes Nirvana or Bhakti, or Sonship, as abstract principles, but always goes to Buddha, or Chaitanya, or Jesus to learn what they mean ; and further, Jesus and Buddha and Chaitanya are not merely figures of history, foreign and extraneous to the mind studying them, but they are, as they must be to every idealist, facts within the mind itself, to be understood, appreciated, and assimilated by the inward power of spiritual apprehension alone, or never to be understood at all. Spiritual sympathy is the only means of understanding Character, great or small, whose significance must otherwise be completely missed, however great may be the scholarship which we devote to our study. The New Dispensation aims at organizing such a spiritual pilgrimage to all the saints of the world, irrespective of denomination or nationality.

(2) *Significance of Sacraments.*—The New Dispensation takes up into itself the sacramental, as distinguished from the purely carnal and secular, view of the functions of life. It would abolish the distinction between the church and the home, between Sunday and other days ; it would look upon the most necessary and ordinary occupations of life as indistinguishable from acts of worship. It is from this point of view that it interprets some of the sacraments specially sanctioned by the great world religions, such as Baptism and the Eucharist, the *Arati* and the *Hom* ceremony. It does not encourage a multiplication of ceremonials itself ; but it endeavours to enter into the spiritual significance of the ceremonials sanctioned by all religions. Its own ideal is a life of simplicity, spontaneity and naturalness ; consecrated in all its details to the Eternal Spirit ; looking forward to no other Heaven than a loving union with, and an eternal life in God.

CHRISTIANITY (Protestantism.)

(1ST PAPER.)

The Christian Faith—its founder and his Message

BY

Rev. HERBERT ANDERSON.

MAHARAJA, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IT is to me an unalloyed pleasure to take part in this Convention of Religions, and I desire to thank its promoters for the honor as well as the responsibility of presenting to this great gathering the claims of the Protestant Christian Faith. I speak with no delegated authority and in no representative capacity but as a humble disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Asiatic, the Jew, the Prophet of Nazareth, the son of man, the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind.

It is a coincidence, but to me a remarkable one, that this first Convention of Religions in India should be gathered on the three great days of the Christian year, during which the Church of Christ throughout Christendom commemorated the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of the Lord she loves.

My paper is entitled—the Christian Faith, its Founder and His Message, and without further introduction I will ask your patient and sympathetic attention to the same.

The Christian Faith rests on a notable series of historic facts, associating itself with certain events which occurred at definite dates in the drama of human History. Historical in its origin, it claims to rest on divine revelation, having as its fundamental postulate, a personal, holy and self-revealing God and in its content it is a religion of redemption. This gives to it a power that exalts it above all that human nature can create out of its own resources. Indeed it claims to be able to impart to that nature a new life and to change it in its inmost principles. From the cold clear realm of objective fact it passes mysteriously to the warm hidden

sphere of subjective experience. As a religion of redemption it deals with the existence of natural and moral evil in the world, the darkest, deepest, and most difficult problem that can occupy human thought. It regards sin as the free act of the person committing it, neither normal nor necessary to his existence and which absolutely ought not to be. Despite his sin, it regards man as God's offspring. The evidences of the divine element in human life are the possession of attributes inherent in man's highest conception of God. In his capacity for love, in his appreciation of goodness and beauty, in his thirst for knowledge, in his eagerness to create, in his desire for dominion and in his passion for life, he gives clear evidence of his kinship to the Deity and of his likeness in the deepest part of his being, to his God. But the divine in the human was not realized. The sum total of human life spells failure. In any and all characteristics of the divine above referred to, something has come in, to mar the beauty, destroy the power and make human life, in all its relationships, individual and social, a broken ideal. If men were nought but evolved beasts then humanity is to be congratulated on its progress. But the ruin and degradation of man lies not in what he is, in comparison with other men, but in what he is, compared with what he was made to be. His divine origin and divine possibilities stamp his attainments as degraded. He has lost his Father's image, disgraced his father's reputation and has become a prodigal child. The faith of Christ claims to be God's method of restoring his lost divinity to man. It is a revelation of duty and of destiny. It proposes to mankind a new character, and declares the way of its achievement. Its spiritual evangel is that, salvation is for the nations of the earth by the remission of their sins. It is a religion of Hope. Life's trials and sorrows are the disciplines of God's love. Death is a quiet sleep and the resurrection draws near, the beatific vision of God and eternal glories.

Glancing at its historical progress and principles of propagation, the faith of Christ secured a firm footing in the world without any aid from the secular arm and without the sword. So far from State countenance, it triumphed in the early centuries in spite of opposition, persecution, and manifold apparent defeats. It offered no worldly attraction and gave no worldly indulgences. "My kingdom" said Jesus, "is not of this world". It nowhere interfered with the civil institutions of the countries into which it penetrated, nor with any social customs or practices which were not in themselves immoral or idolatrous. It has guided the channels of

human life by the enunciation of principles of wide and far-reaching application, adapting itself to deal with the most advanced as with the initial stages of social development, and intellectual elevation and it must ever be ascribed to the glory of the Christian faith, that most of the important reforms and philanthropies prevailing to day, throughout Christendom have proceeded directly from its teachings. Of all forces that seek to destroy false social distinctions it has been the most democratic, proclaiming that God is never far from any man and that He accepteth not the person of princes neither regardeth the rich man more than the poor, being ever near to all that call upon him in sincerity and truth.

Its scriptures are the Bible the most translated book of the world, which professes to contain within it, a revelation high as the nature of God, deep as the needs of men, universal as the wants of the race, sweeping as the scale of human life, rehearsing the sins, fears, the doubts and hopes, the aspirations and attainments of the children of men, and because the most human, the most divine of Books. It tells us how God's revelation of his purpose was gradual, progressive, manifold and worked out unrestingly in patient length of days, having for its centre that most definite reality in all human history--Him who fills all time and "pours upon our fading years the light of immortality".

The Christian faith is not therefore a religion that can be said to have sprung up out of the hidden depths of man's nature. It is not a philosophy of life--the product of devout imagination--nor is it a scientific or ecclesiastical system. It even refuses to be regarded as one theory among the rest, but in the person of its founder claims to be The Truth, at once the synthesis and completion of all vital elements in the religious thoughts of mankind "I am" said Jesus, "the way, the truth, and the life."

And if these things be so--and I have endeavoured to state the general characteristics of the Christian faith in a way acceptable to all who bear the name of Christ and open to the fullest investigation, the clearest and most searching criticism of those who do not claim discipleship with him--we pass naturally to the consideration of the greatest phenomenon of human history--**Jesus Christ the founder of the Christian Faith.**

I need scarcely retell to such an audience as this, the story which the four evangelists give us of the human

experiences of Jesus Christ. It is the tragedy of truth—cradled in a manger, reared in a village, trained in a workshop, three short years of ministration, which the historian Lecky tells us,—“did more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists”—numbered with transgressors—a solitary sufferer, dying on a cross, in the darkness, derided by men, forsaken by God, seen after death, a scarred and mangled victor of the tomb—he passes back to the hidden glory, commissioning his disciples to go forth on their mission to mankind, to preach the evangel of God’s love in a redemption completed in himself.

A modern writer points out a remarkable characteristic of this Eastern Prophet. We read a historic evangel about him and as we meet him on the cold pages of history, in some wonderful and arresting way, we find our own moral being interrogated, the hidden secrets of our thoughts, affections and wills all interviewed, laid bare and challenged. We had thought intellectually to examine Him—we find He is spiritually examining us. We study Jesus and find we are in the profoundest way spiritually disturbed. He challenges attention and we have to take up some inward moral attitude of heart and will towards Him. Rejected, the Christ of history is relegated back to a merely historic externality : accepted, the Christ of history becomes a fact of religion—an inward experience of spiritual benediction, a union that can be expressed, without hyperbole, in the words “I live—yet not I—but Christ liveth in me.”

I presume it would be difficult to find a gathering of men among whom greater differences of opinion could exist concerning the founder of the Christian Faith, than are to be found in this hall to-day. In imagination, I picture Him coming into our midst. He will not speak, but listen as we discuss the elements of His character. Did anything differentiate him *in holiness* from the moral leaders of humanity? Did He not introduce into virtue a passion that not only condemns but consumes all evil? Has not the moral ideal for you and for me been raised so that holiness is no longer an outward garment of beauty but an inward refining passion of the soul? Among masters of the soul, has a life of *humility* ever been seen as it was seen in Him? Truly He had a right to make that grace the portal to the Faith he founded. “Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.” And what of *forgiveness*? See him

there hanging on the accursed tree. In agony of soul he might well have been dumb. But no—those lips quivering with pain breathe the prayer "Father forgive them—for they know not what they do." Has any prayer ever uttered done more in the world for reconciliation and peace among men? And was He not *incarnate love*. How he yearned and prayed and laboured and died for men! He made love the first and supreme law of human life. His love was wonderful—is wonderful to-day. Others have caught faint glimpses of a love that can regenerate the human soul. Christ lived it and so enlarged, intensified and exalted it.

To what does this lead us? Is it not to this that, if the greatness of a man is to be estimated by the purity and dignity of his own personal character Jesus is supreme among men. To this point many of you would accompany me. Now we come to the parting of the ways.

This same Jesus made stupendous claims. Never betraying a sense of moral imperfection or of moral need, He proclaimed Himself the *Sufficer* of the needs of all others saying "come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Conscious himself of being for the mankind an ideal example of character He claims to be the power that inspires men to its achievement by indwelling. So that when a man accepts Christ he finds in Him a life and power that are of God himself. This is Eternal life, to know God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Men find God not beyond Christ but in Him. Still more startling, He claims to hold a relationship to his disciples which means that for them He is that which only God Himself can be. He forgives sin, conscience reserves no rights before Him. Hearts and wills are His. He claims lordship over the prerogatives of personal life and announces himself as the judge of the world—the arbiter of the everlasting destinies of mankind, making that ultimate destiny depend upon personal relationship to Himself. Upon the basis of the character of the founder of the Christian Truth, we judge His claims and neither intellectual sincerity nor moral candour permit us to rest in a conception of Him as one of the prophets, a god-filled man in whom the divine wonderfully dwelt. By facts and claims we are compelled to press up to a higher conception. That, as the poet Browning wrote :—

"The immensely yearned for, once befell"

"God once assumed on Earth a human shape."

To me the divinity of Jesus Christ is neither an intellectual nor a moral difficulty. My imagination is not staggered at the thought that the Deity so exists as to be able to find a home in a human life. As one has said as truly as there is an immanent presence of God in nature while also there is a transcendent existence of God beyond nature so there is an immanent presence of God in Christ while there is also a transcendent existence of God beyond Christ. Modern psychology as making us familiar with different strata of consciousness is our own complex personality, the subliminal self being greater and deeper than the self expressed in thought and action. So that when I read "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" I believe that it was the same Word that was in the beginning, that was with God, that was God and here, in the presence of the Founder of the Faith I hold—I am driven to what to you may seem the incredible, but to me is the wholly inevitable, conclusion—that I must bow in adoration at His nail-pierced feet and say "My Lord and my God".

In conclusion let us pass on to consider **the Message of Jesus Christ to mankind.**

It was a message of Redemption, the redemption of humanity by Himself, but in order to make it plain much had to be told of God, the soul and sin.

What had He to say about God? For after all the character of God is the deepest of all questions of faith. Jesus accepted the teaching of the Jewish Faith in its view of a personal and holy God, the author of the universe, the creator of the world its moral legislator,

"Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean, and the living air
And the blue sky and in the mind of man."

He added thereto the teaching of God's fatherhood. As made by God and standing in the relation to Him of offspring there is essential kinship between the human spirit and the divine, but the claim to be sons of God can only belong to those who have been subjects of spiritual renewal and who bear in some measure the moral and spiritual likeness of the Father. True sons are they who come back to the Father's Home. But further in a deeper examination of the teaching of Christ regarding God there is an answer to the views found in various realms of religious thought. He is the all in all—the divine immanence lying behind all pantheistic

conceptions. He is over all—the divine transcendence insisted upon in theistic thought. He is social as well as solitary the gleam of truth in polytheistic as well as modern theistic teaching, and in the latest form of age—long idolatry, the worship of humanity, one only beholds the craving of the heart for the human in God answered in the fact of the incarnation and the mystery of the Trinity. Had there been time I should go on to show that the redemption of Humanity, has according to the message of Christ himself been accomplished in and through His incarnation, His life on earth, his death in Calvary, wherein, as one of his early disciples wrote, ‘the author of Eternal Salvation offered up himself as one sacrifice of sins for ever.’ Also in the power of his resurrection, and ascension, and finally by the witness of his Church to the present age, which has been commissioned to carry on a campaign which shall not cease till the consummation of the age and the second coming of the Lord. In Christ’s message to mankind of Father, Son and Spirit, one God is the consummation and the only perfect protection of a theistic faith, discovered to man in facts of God’s full revelation. The element of self-distinctions is not an intellectual contradiction. All who admit that God is love must also admit that social nature is of the very essence of the divine being. The communication of his life—the reciprocation of his affections must date from beyond all time—belongs to his eternal being. If the Father was so from all time, He was so as father—and love was actual as well as potential within the God-head. He is lover, beloved and love. I frankly admit that finite analogies to express the infinite reality of God are and must ever be imperfect but the teaching of Jesus is sweet as it is true “when ye pray say ‘our Father.’”

Christ’s evangel of forgiveness is further based upon the fact of human sin—a revolt, as he taught, of the human will against the divine will—so great and awful that it cuts the soul off from its true life and blessedness in union with God, and has brought disorder into all creation. So high was his destiny and so awful his fall that his salvation become alone possible in a gracious purpose of God who sent His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

The redemption of the human race was accomplished by His incarnation—whereby of His own free will and gracious condescension “the word become flesh and dwell among men, entering into all the limitations that resulted from the

ruin caused by sin, and men beholding him" beheld His glory—the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. It was accomplished by His human life on earth during and through which he lived out the Divine in man and shewed for ever the high potentialities of a redeemed human character. "I am come" said He "that men may have life and may have it abundantly". This redemption was accomplished by his death in Calvary which judged in the clear light of his own sayings and the teachings of his apostles was a vicarious death. The author of eternal salvation offered in Himself, as one sacrifice of sins for ever. I am the Good Shepherd—said Jesus. "The good shepherd layeth down His life for the sheep." Amid all the difficulties intellectual and moral that some men have felt in the Christian doctrine of the atonement of the Saviour for the Sins of the world, this fact stands out and cannot be gainsaid that the Christian Church all down the ages has consistently held that Christ in his death took upon himself the responsibility of the ruin of the race, and that church has never ceased, like the prophet of the desert, to proclaim "Behold the lamb of God that take away the Sin of the world." Again, redemption was accomplished by the triumph of Christ's resurrection from the dead in which he becomes to his disciples not a dead memory, but a living spirit. Behind this stupendous fact lies the belief that the withdrawal of the spirit at death, does not involve the breaking up of the existence of the individual and a clear perception that individual human life cannot be conceived apart from a body. Hence if life is to be restored—the body must be restored also. The resurrection of Christ thus became a message to humanity of a place of existence after death—not a renewal of the present life under its present conditions but a new and more glorious one, the last stage in that wonderful progress of the soul towards union with God. The Resurrection was however more than this. It was the seal of Divine acceptance upon the teaching, the life and the sacrifice of the Saviour. It justified his claim to be the son of God and has never ceased to fill any house of sorrow and mourning, where He is believed in and loved, with the consoling presence of Him who said "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

Redemption was accomplished by His glorious ascension. Harken to this triumphant prayer of St. Paul, Christ's greatest disciple, "I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory may give unto you a spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of Christ, having

the eyes of your heart enlightened, that Ye may know what is the hope of your calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to usward, according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at his right-hand in the heavens, far above all rule and authority, and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world—but also in that which is to come."

And finally the redemption of Humanity is being accomplished in and through His witness on Earth—the church—founded by them, endued at its commencement with power from on high by the gift of the Holy Spirit, and commissioned to carry on a campaign that shall not cease till humanity acknowledges redemption in Him. "Go Ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you and he I am with you always even unto the end of the world."

The religion of Christ proclaims therefore a redemption adequate to the sin and need of Humanity—but it does so by dealing with the individual sinner. If Christianity is a sinner's only religion, what, it may well be asked, is a Christian? A definition exhaustive of the profoundest Christianity and admissive of the simplest is that a Christian is a man whose mental and moral attitude to Christ is one of spiritual response. In all the varied circumstances of experience, within and without himself there must be a mutual speaking and hearing between the saviour and the soul. Religion to a Christian is a touch, an intercourse, a call, a duty, a fight and a victory. "To me to live is Christ" is the devout soul's daily motto. The great question of the Christian Faith comes therefore to be a very practical and very personal one and addresses itself to all who are at this moment listening to my voice "What think ye of Christ?" How important is the answer. For God now commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent, inasmuch as He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man Christ Jesus whom He hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised them from the dead. Men and Brethren, You need Christ for your own sakes if you are going to live rightly and die restfully—you need him for

the sake of others if in any deep and real way you would serve them.

It is thirty years ago that from this platform in this very hall the great Keshab Chandra Sen uttered words that are the profoundest conviction of my own heart "none but Jesus, none but Jesus, none but Jesus ever deserved this precious diadem—India—and Jesus shall have it."

CHRISTIANITY (2nd. Paper).

Roman Catholicism.

BY

REV. JOHN A. FRANCIS, (N. N. GHOSE)

*A short summary of the thesis received from the
Convention Committee.*

The light of Christianity awakened in the early centuries a spirit of enquiry and created a thirst for true religion all over the world with the result that a taste for Christian philosophy and theology has been cultivated and the Bible is now read by most of the civilized nations of the world.

Built as it is on the solid foundation of *faith in God* and *love for all men*, as personified in Jesus Christ, Christianity teaches universal love and purity in men and gives a stimulus to every noble effort for the progress of mankind.

The question has often been asked whether Christianity is a natural or a revealed religion. The answer is that it is a religion revealed by God in the Man-Christ.

But that is not the most important point at issue between Christians and non-Christians. The point is, whether Christianity is fit to be an universal religion and whether it can unite the whole human race in one common bond.

Christianity possesses all the qualities of an universal religion. It is a catholic religion.

The grandeur of Christianity is in its simplicity. It is within the reach of the learned and the ignorant alike.

Christ founded His religion on love. God is love. According to the Christians, God seeks man, lives human life, shares human troubles, ministers to the sick and raises the dead.

Thus the fundamental doctrine of Christianity is the Incarnation of God. God revealed Himself in man. The Man-Christ is believed by all Christians to be the best revelation of God in man.

Christian philosophy does not separate God entirely from man by teaching that there is nothing in common between the two, by which God can be mediated. The central figure of Christianity is Christ, who is called "*Emmanuel*" or God with us. He is as far removed from the stern and despotic God of monotheism, as from the finite imperfect gods of polytheism. We see God in the Man-Christ, full of sympathy for us, and also in nature, providence and history,—“above all” and “through all.”

Another prominent feature of Christianity is “self-realization” as distinguished from and opposed to “self-assertion.” Christianity teaches that if a man chooses “self-realization” he lives, but if he chooses “self-assertion” he dies. The path to self-realization lies through self-discipline and self-sacrifice. No man, who is self-centred, can ever realize himself. Self-assertion, on the other hand, leads to self-indulgence and selfishness and ends in spiritual death. The one path leads through seeming death, to the only real life, and the other leads through seeming life, and to the only real death.

Christianity is complete both on its spiritual side and on its material side—full, both with regard to the infinite and the finite, both with regard to God and nature. Bold, devout and patient, it is capable at once of the loftiest thoughts and the most heroic actions. It combines the most ascetic self-denial with the most noble self-realization.

Christianity is an elastic religion, coming, as it does, not to destroy but to fulfil. Being not a system but a life, not a creed or form but a spirit, it is capable of meeting all the wants of an advancing civilization by new developments and adaptations.

The Catholic Church insists upon *faith, good works* and *confession* as necessary for salvation, while other Churches hold that *faith* only is sufficient for salvation.

But there are two kinds of faith mentioned in the Holy Scriptures—the one makes a man believe and act with humility while the other makes the devils believe and tremble.

St. James has beautifully described faith by good work : "Works, though there are many and artificial (that is, without faith), yet works are as surely the fruit of faith, as apples are of the apple-tree. Works without faith would be worthless. Thus it is that the wheat and tares grow together. We only see the works, but the Omnipresent reads the motives which instigate the doers, and He distinguishes between the fruits of faith and the artificial or tare."

Confession is ignored in other Churches. It is said that confession to a man is an abomination in the eye of God.

In answer it may be said that all confessions in the Catholic Church begin with the following words : "I confess to Almighty God, to the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned &c."

It may also be mentioned that our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ said to His chosen Apostles "Whosoever sins you remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins you retain they are retained."

The Catholic Church enjoins us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Are we not conjured to take heed lest, thinking that we stand, we should fall? Does not our Blessed Lord say "He that would be my disciple must take up his cross daily and follow me"? Are we not asked to deny ourselves and to crucify our carnal nature? Do not these refer to *works*? Work without faith is useless, we all admit; so is also faith without work.

We are told that every man's work shall follow him, that by his deeds done in the body shall the judgment be given, that every man's deeds shall be tried in the fire, and those without faith shall be consumed as dross. Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount is pregnant with exhortations for good works. Nothing can be grander and yet more plain than these words of our Lord : "I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me"?

The Sacred Scriptures abound in evidence regarding the necessity of good works as being the natural result of divine faith. Without them, entrance to the Kingdom of Christ can never be gained.

CHRISTIANITY (3rd paper.)

(Pentecostal League.)

BY SAMUEL A. CHISHOLM.

We believe in the Bible from beginning to end and accept it as the inspired Word of God and recognize the Holy Spirit, to be its Author and Interpreter. He used to voice His thoughts, purposes, plans and doings concerning Himself and man, through its sacred pages by putting them in the mouths of men at different times, in different places, and of different nationalities.

We believe in the Trinity and the Unity of God.

Just as man may be analysed into Spirit, Soul and Body, and yet is one man, so God is one God, and yet the Trinity,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit).

When God was about to create man, He did not say, "Let *me* make man in *my* image and after *my* likeness," but He did say, "Let *us* make man in *our* image and after *our* likeness." The Trinity, therefore is implied by the use of the plural number, and Jesus Christ when on Earth, as recorded by St. John, said, "If a man loves me (obeys me) he will keep my words ; and my Father will love him, and *We* (the Trinity) will come unto him, and make *our* abode with him"—and "He that receiveth whomsoever I send (the Holy Spirit), receiveth Me (the son of God), and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him (the Father) that sent Me".

We believe in that great personal foe of God and Man called the Devil or Satan. Satan's works are threefold as touching man, *viz.*, sin in the heart, sickness in the body, and death in the soul (loss of true spiritual life) and the Son of God was sent down that He might set at naught the works of the devil. That this is so, is made good to the man who believes in and acts upon it and receives by faith the Holy Spirit who confers upon the obedient soul the benefits procured for him by the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Agreement or atonement originally existed between God and man, but the latter broke it, in allowing sin to enter him, by wilfully hearkening to Satan rather than to God. So the sinful man could not have fellowship with the Holy God, any more than darkness could agree with light. However,

though the Holy God, could not, and never will tolerate sin, insomuch, that He banished sinful man from His Presence, yet, God still loved man himself, while hating man's sin. So, God, the Father, *planned* the atonement, the means by which any man who chose, could be brought into union with Himself again, but on a better footing than that which originally existed. To do it, however, man's sin must be taken into account and *destroyed*. The need of this he taught those who were willing to learn and based His teaching on the fact, that without the shedding of blood, there was no remission of sin and illustrated it in various ways, especially through the sacrifice of animals, when the Fire, consumed them, as they were tied to the altar. But finding that these sacrifices were insufficient to meet man's highest need (though they served to illustrate to man, the purpose of the atonement), the Father closed that period of types and illustrations which served as shadows or pictures of Heavenly Realities. Then the Father in His love for Humanity and hatred of sin, sent His son, who willingly came to carry out, the atonement, the Father had planned, thought and illustrated. So the Father in the person of Jesus, His Son, took our human nature upon Himself and lived, suffered, died and rose again as the son of God and as the Son of man and breathed the earnest of the Holy Spirit on His disciples on the resurrection evening, and some days later ascended to Glory, after having carried out the atonement His Father had planned and then received from Him in Heaven the Holy Ghost, whom He poured forth upon those, who were willing to have the atonement, applied in their cases. So the Holy Spirit is here to-day to apply in our cases, if we are so willing and obedient, the atonement which the Father had planned, and the son carried out. So we see—

the Father *planned* the atonement,
 The Son, *carried it out*—
 and The Holy Spirit *applies it*,
 When we receive Him.

This is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit—and He is received by faith and not by feeling necessarily. True faith is based on fact and all of us are given a measure of faith. When I write an important letter and register it at the post office, I know it will reach its destination. I trust the government officials who are responsible for the delivery of the letter, since I have fulfilled their conditions and got the receipt.

That is practical faith ; and in the spiritual realm, God would not have us hazy, lazy, or unbusiness-like.

Jesus, when on Earth, told people who were parents that they would not give their children a stone for bread, a serpent for fish, or a scorpion for an egg, and if they, being evil to begin with, knew how to give good gifts unto their children, "how much more shall the Heavenly Father give the Holy spirit to them that ask Him".

"This, an eminent Divine said truly, is the *magna charta* of this wonderful Prayer Movement, called the Pentecostal League", which is interdenominational and international. So we pray daily that all believers may be filled with the Holy Spirit, that sinners may be saved and pray as well for the spread of *scriptural* holiness and righteousness throughout the whole world.

We do not say we are more righteous or better than other people, for we know we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God but simply pray for others as well as for our selves and so many of us have learned to turn to Jesus only as our saviour and have prayed for and received the Holy Spirit to make His salvation good to us, and we know He has made it good. This is, what the Bible calls the 'New Birth.' It is then, and then only that our eyes are opened to see the Kingdom of God, and the realm of Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit ; and freed instantaneously from the habits of sin that bound us in the past, our New Life truly begins and is as blessedly loved as the Holy Spirit within is recognised and relied upon and obeyed.

Then there comes a crisis when the Holy Spirit shows the obedient Soul, that though He dwells within, He does not reign, because there is still the disposition towards sin within, which must be displaced by the disposition towards Holiness before He can reign.

This is done however, by the Lord, who gives the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Fire, when we utterly disclaim for good, all right to ourselves and yield ourselves wholly to Him. Then He preserves our spirit, Soul, and body, wholly sanctified, until He comes to take us to Himself. Thus are we brought into a better relationship with God, than what existed before the original Fall of man. For, having known of the bitterness of Satan's tyranny and the slavery of sin

and the exile from the Fathers' holy presence, the restoration of man to the likeness of the Trinity again, brought about by the atonement, vouchsafes to man and ushers in a state of blessedness obviously more glorious than what it had been if there were no fall and consequently no atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Atonement means *at-one-ment*. Before the Fall it was God *with* man, now it may be God *in* man.

God says in the Old Testament—"How can two walk together unless they be agreed" and agreement by man must be accepted on God's terms, and not on man's. Since God is our Creator and we are as clay in the hand of the Potter, how can we know what is best for us? So the only way to find true and lasting happiness for ourselves is to give Him the fullest obedience and reliance He desires, by accepting what He chooses for us. He has created and redeemed us, and has a right on us, and has our highest and best interests in view. When man is thus united (the word religion means, to bind or unite) with God through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit in him, he recognizes the fact, that he is no longer his own, no more a separate entity. He feels, that he has been bought with a price and that for a purpose—*viz.*, that God may be glorified in his body and spirit which now belong to God and that his blessed heart may be the temple of the Holy Ghost, from within which true and acceptable worship shall continually arise through Jesus Christ. The result is that we are linked with God, in His working for the good of our fellow-men, in this world. We do not judge them since our master came, not to condemn the world, but to save those who would accept His Salvation. These works are, however, not done to procure favour for ourselves with God, (since that has already been procured for us, by Lord Jesus Christ), but are the outcome of the Love of God, that the Holy Ghost bestows in our hearts, by virtue of the atonement, so that love not only finds expression in worship, praise and prayer, but also in deeds and works of gratitude to God, done for the common good of all our fellowmen, whom He loves, and it is in this way that God manifests, or expresses Himself *through* us when we are thus *free*. He can and does work in and through us, at His good pleasure, keeping us in union with Himself, so that we can walk in agreement with him. Jesus in glory, through the Holy Spirit, as recorded by St. John in the Book of Revelation, says "They shall walk with me in *white*, for

they are worthy". That means righteousness, not only imputed but also imparted. Because not only do they partake of Divine Life in the New Birth through the reception of the Holy Spirit, but also of the Divine Nature through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Fire; and holiness is character, and character is God-given. This is what is meant by man being made *white* or pure in the blood or life of the Lamb, Jesus Christ,—clothed as he is with His Spirit and glory—and who is also reconciled by His death which took place some 2000 years ago at the place called near Jerusalem—the centre of the Religious world of that Calvary, time.

This death is a historical fact, which cannot alter our lives, unless, we accept the scriptural doctrine of *identification* with Jesus Christ.

The Word of God says—"One died for all"—

That is, the innocent for the guilty, and if we stop there, it is *substitution* merely and *not identification*, but He goes on to say—"Therefore all died".

That means not only Jesus for us and with us but we died with Him. So everyone in the eye of God was hung upon the cross with Jesus Christ 2000 years ago. He not only died as God for man, but as God with men and as Man. He died not only as the Son of God, but also as the Son of man, through the Holy Spirit, through whose agency He was born unto the world.

So, if we recognise the fact, that we have died with Him, since He has already identified Himself with us, we may say with St. Paul, "He that is dead is freed from Sin—Sin hath no more dominion over him." But we must not stop there, for Jesus as the firstborn among many bretheren rose again, not only for us, but also with us, as the son of man as well as the son of God, and the Father in Heaven raised up the dead body of His Son, by the Holy Spirit, whom we must receive if we are to have Divine assurance as to the reality of these things being wrought out in our personal experience.

Of course we must co-operate with Him and our faith must be based on Divine facts, as revealed in His written word, inspired in us, by the Holy Spirit, that He may bear witness with our Spirits that we are the children of God—through the identification with the Son of God, and also that just as Christ

was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so shall we also have power to walk in the new life after death. 'We should no longer live unto ourselves but unto Him who died and rose again'. This will prove to us as nothing else can, that Jesus is both Divine and Human, because we are linked with Him, through the Holy Spirit from Heaven and because His name is *Jesus*—for He has saved us *from* our sins, not *in* our sins. And as we walk in the light of the Spirit—illuminated by the word of God, we know His name to be *Immanuel* also, which means, *God with us*, and so it is in this way that this scriptural Identification with the Lord in his Death and Resurrection, works out in the doctrine of the New Birth, (just touched on above) and becomes a living fact in our ordinary daily lives, by His Extraordinary grace.

Then the Holy Spirit who leads us on to all truth, as far as we are willing to see, and realise, shows us that not only is Union or Identification with God, necessary in our lives, but if we are to continue in obedience (or else forfeit all) we must be identified spiritually with Jesus in His life in Heaven. For He lives there, not only as the son of God, but also as the son of Man, and is our representative there, in a glorified human body, for he ate and drank after he rose from the dead.

The Holy Spirit tells us through God's word that 'naught that defileth shall enter the glory, and the pure in heart only, shall see God'. So we see that though we have been saved from actual Sin, negatively and positively—that is—enabled by the Spirit not do the things we ought not to, and to do the things we ought to do thus manifesting to the world a new creation, or Spiritual new Birth, yet we are brought home to the fact that there is still the original Sin within us—that is,—Sin in being, in disposition and in mind, and though not responsible for it before we saw it, (for God is just) yet, now that we see it, we are responsible for its utter destruction. Now since God can, and is ever willing to do the same for us, if we are so willing and obedient to His will, we shall lose the privilege if we do not also claim our identification with Him, who ascended and was brought by the Father into Heaven, through the Blood, Life or Spirit of the eternal Covenant as our representative, and who now says from glory in the Book of Revelation, 'I am He that liveth and was dead,' and as we by faith put our original sin, inherited from Adam, where He has already put it, *viz.*—in His death, since we died with him,—and it is true, that our old man

was crucified with Him—and then trust that the Living One in Heaven even now baptizes His people in the Holy Spirit and in Fire, when they yield wholly and through Faith, He at once by an act of His, reveals the Flaming Presence of our God, who is a consuming Fire in our hearts, to the destruction and banishment of all *not of Himself* in our beings and we come to know *original sin* to be a thing of the past and done away with, so that we have free access unto the Father, through Christ Jesus, by the Holy Spirits anointing in continuous supply—and it is in this way that we may be continually identified with, the Second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ in His life in Heaven. Thus if we allow Him to reign over us, in us, and through us, we can prove to all around us in our different spheres of life in this world that He is able to keep that which we (ourselves) have committed unto Him, against that day—*viz.*, His Second Advent, and prove that He is alive for evermore. The result is, that we share with Him the work He is carrying on in glory, with the others, who have been made members of His body, by the Holy Spirit's Baptism. All members are not given exactly the same work to do, or rather they are not all given the same functions to perform, any more than the hand of the human body does the same work as the foot, etc., but are however, all governed by the same head alike. the Lord Jesus Christ, in glory, if we only allow ourselves, (which God gives us power to do, since He has purified our hearts) to be kept in living response to Him, the Head in glory. His representatives on Earth,—for 'as He is, so are we in this world,' says, St. John and therefore He is able to express Himself through them to those with whom they come in contact. He is coming to the Earth again, for the members of His body and His judgments will then fall upon this Earth, so that those who will not learn to fear and love God, may be brought to see His omnipotence and Holy justice and anger against Sin. Then Christ will come back to the Earth with the members of His body and His material kingdom will be set up in Jerusalem, when God's covenanted people will possess Palestine, and all the nations of the Earth will have to submit to His rule. This will last for about 1000 years, during which time, Satan will be shut up in His prison, after which he will be set at liberty again, for a little while, to wage war, in company with those who side with him, against Christ and His saints, that it may be proved, that God and His Christ only are almighty, and

that all power belongs unto Him. Then the final judgment will take place and everlasting shame and contempt will be the portion of the wicked and the Devil and eternal bliss that of the righteous, in company with the Lamb, who was slain for them, and the Angels of God.

ISLAM.

(IST PAPER.)

Islam : its Aims and Scope.

BY

MAULVI MIRZA ABUL-FAZL.

INTRODUCTION.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

THROUGH the kindness of my colleagues, I am entrusted with the great honour of introducing the subject of Islam in this Convention of Religions in India. In order, therefore, to present as complete a view of my subject as is consistent with the limits of this short paper, I would at once begin with the significance of the word "Islam."

Islam, the proper name of the Mohammedan religion, comes from the Arabic root *salama*, which signifies to be tranquil, at rest, to have done one's duty, to have paid up, to be at perfect peace, and finally, to strive after righteousness with one's own strength.

Position of Islam.

It must be particularly borne in mind that the Islam of Mohammed does not profess to be a new religion, its strongest claims being to restore the primitive faiths of the prophets and preachers of bygone ages to their original purity and simplicity.

According to Islam, "Men were of one religion, and God sent prophets with glad tidings and with warnings, and sent down with them the book with truth to judge between men in what they disagreed ; and none disagreed therein . . . but out of hatred among themselves."*

* Koran ii. 209.

Islam only emphasized the teachings of each of the prophets who, in their own age,* and to their own people, † taught in their own language, ‡ lessons of wisdom and of truth. § Throughout the teachings of Islam there is no slandering the great teachers who had long since done their work and retired from this world, not a word of disrespect or the slightest hint to maligning. On the contrary, the greatest deference is shown to each one of them.

"Say thou," says the Koran, "We believe in God, and what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what has been given to Moses and Jesus, and the prophets from their Lord,—we make no distinction between any of them—and after Him we strive."

Its Principles Natural.

The message of Islam was simple enough. "Come," says the Koran, "I'll tell you what your Lord has forbidden you—that ye join not anything with Him, and that ye be good to your parents, and draw not nigh to in chastity, neither openly nor in secret, and kill not a being which God has forbidden unless for justice. . . . And give weight and measure with justice. . . . And when ye speak be just, although in the case of a relative. That is what He ordains you that ye may mind. Verily this is my right way ; then follow it." ¶

And surely none of the moral creeds could afford to oppose a system such as it was ; though degraded humanity often followed the baser instinct : these were regarded as "going astray"—their religion not being held responsible for their character. In the Koran such people are called an "unjust people" and "transgressors." "Those who are unjust follow their own lusts in their ignorance."***

The religion of man was considered to be a straight, natural law, wherein was no perplexity or ambiguity, and all

* Koran xiii. 38.

† x. 47.

‡ xiv. 4.

§ ii. 146.

¶ ii. 130. The good old learned doctors of Islam like Shah Wali-ullah, Abdul-Aziz, and a host of others have, in their learned works, mentioned, among others in India, Shri Ramchandra, Shri Krishna, and Buddha as prophets of God whose good and pious examples are alike the admiration of the world. And in the latter day Maulana Abdul-Kaiyum and Maulana Hasan Nizami (successor of His Holiness Khajah Nizam-ud-Din Aulia) have laid great stress on this point with wonderful success.

¶ Koran vi. 152-4.

*** xxx. 28.

men were believed to be born in Islam, as the one religion best suited to the natural bent of a free, unbiassed mind.

"And thou," says the Koran, "set thy face steadfast towards the religion as one upright, the constitution whereon God has constituted men,—there is no change in the creation of God ;—that is the standard religion, though most men do not know."*

At the same time it was plainly laid down that the general conduct of men was not always upto the ideal : "But if thou follow most of those who are in the earth, they will surely lead thee aside from the path of God ; they follow an opinion only and rest on mere conjecture."†

Sectarianism Condemned.

Islam has always discountenanced division among men on the ground of religion merely, its teachings being directly opposed to sectarianism and based on the broadest principle :

"O men," such was the Divine message which Mohammed brought to his people, "Surely We have made you of a male and a female, and have distributed you into nations and tribes that ye might know one another, but the most honourable of you in the sight of God is he who most fears to do evil."‡

"But those who make a division in their religion and become sectaries, have thou nothing to do with them—their affair is with God : He will yet tell them of what they have done."§ "They say, Nay ! but we'll do as we found our fathers doing. What ! and though their fathers had no sense at all or guidance?"|| "They say, None shall enter paradise except such as are Jews or Christians. That is their faith. Say thou, Bring your proofs if ye speak the truth. Nay, whoso strives with his face to God and does good—he shall have his reward with his Lord, there is no fear for them, neither shall they grieve. The Jews say, the Christians are grounded on nothing, and the Christians say, the Jews are grounded on nothing ;—and yet they read the book. So too say those who are gentiles, like to what these say. But God will judge between them on the day of Judgment concerning that whereon they now dispute."¶ "They say, Be ye Jews or Christians, so shall ye be guided. Say

thou, Not so ! But the religion of Abraham the upright man—and he was not of those who joined others with God.”*

Priesthood Rejected.

The Islam of Mohammed rejected all caste of priesthood, all monopoly of spiritual knowledge or special holiness to intervene between man and his God : “The baptism of God we have, and who is better than God at baptising ? Him we worship.” † “We are of God, and to Him we shall return.” ‡

True Religion.

The religion of the former prophets was not a creed-bound dogma but a life of earnest, faithful work : “Will ye say that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians ?” § “Surely Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian, but he was an upright man and one who strove, and was not of those who joined others with God.” ||

The probable consequences of this natural burst of expansiveness was also firmly set forth : “The Jews will not be satisfied with thee, nor yet the Christians, until thou follow their creed. Say thou, God’s guidance—that is the guidance ; and if thou follow their lusts after the knowledge that has come to thee, then thou hast not from God a patron or a help.” ¶

But the good are never mixed up with the bad. Of them the Koran says : “Yet they are not all alike. Of those who read the book there are some upright people : they meditate on the signs of God in the night time and worship, they believe in God and the hereafter, and bid what is just and forbid what is evil and zealously strive in good works ;—these are of the righteous. For, what ye do of good surely God will not deny, for God knows them that fear to do evil.”**

Its Exhortation to Unity.

And an appeal for a reconciliation and co-operation in the matter of truth is thus made :

“Say thou, Will ye dispute with us concerning God ?—and He is our Lord and your Lord. Ye have your work and we have ours, and after Him we strive.” ††

“Say thou, O ye people of the book, come to a just

* ii. 129. † ii. 132. ‡ ii. 152. § ii. 134. || iii. 60.

¶ ii. 113, 114.

** iii. 109-111.

†† ii. 133.

determination between us and you—that we'll not worship anything beside God, and give no companion to Him and that the one of us take not the other for lords rather than God.”*

“O ye people of the book, exceed not the just bounds in your religion, neither say of God any other than the truth.” †

Its Practical Brotherhood.

Mohammed preached the brotherhood of man by totally destroying all the barriers raised against it by the self-interest of man: Humanity was one vast brotherhood, with God as their creator and master who looked upon them all as equal. Speaking of the faithless character of some Jews the Koran says: “They say, We are not obliged to do justice to the gentiles, and they utter a lie against God knowingly; but they shall have no portion in the hereafter, neither shall God speak to them or regard them on the Judgment Day, nor shall He cleanse them, but they shall suffer a severe torment. And there are some of them who read the scriptures perversely that ye may take it to be so in the scripture, and they say, This is from God,—while it is not from God—and they speak what is false concerning God against their own consciences” ‡

To a Moslem, therefore, this wide world presents a vast field for co-operation in the struggle of life towards its ultimate goal. His religion leads him to seek the welfare of humanity in the co-operative spirit as it were, rather than in the competitive. He might have no objection in treating with a non-Moslem, for religion is no barrier to him, unless he is checked by the peculiar caste-rules of the people he is desirous to approach. He may with a quiet conscience eat and even intermarry with them. Mohammed himself, strictly opposed as he was to the religion of the idolaters, had married three of his own daughters § to them, though in the early stormy days of Islam it proved disastrous. His daughters were ill-treated, and finally turned out by their unbelieving husbands, who also joined the people in persecuting Mohammed and his followers. When one of them, Abul-As, came over to Mohammed 6 years later, he allowed his daughter to be united to him under

iii. 62.

† iv. 170.

‡ iii. 74-6.

§ Zeinab, Rokeiyah, and Umm-Kulsum.

the previous marriage—no fresh ceremony or dowry being required. Some other Idolaters had also Moslem wives,* and their marriages were as plainly recognised by Moham-med at those of Moslems having idolatress-wives.†

This was the practical Brotherhood of Man that knew no colour, no creed, and which made men meet on the common platform of humanity, and humanity alone.

Mediation Rejected.

In Islam, each soul rises to its Creator without the intervention of a priest or hierophant, no prophet is required to act as a Mediator or Intercessor :

"Let them alone who take their religion for a play and a sport, and whom this world's life has deceived, and remind them that a soul becomes liable for what it has done, neither has it beside God a patron or intercessor, and though it should atone with the fullest atonement, it will not be accepted of it."‡

Responsibility of Man.

"Will God do with those who believe and do good as with those who do evil in the earth?"§ "God's is what is in the heavens and the earth that He may reward those who do evil with what they do, and may reward those who do good with good."||

A Life of Work.

Islam, above all, is a religion of works. The service of man and the good of humanity constitute pre-eminently the service and worship of God :

"Have We not made him two eyes and a tongue and two lips, and pointed him out the two highways of good and evil ?

"Yet he attempts not the steep one ! And what shall teach thee what that steep one is ?—To free the captive, or to feed on the day of famine the orphan of thy kin, or the poor that lies on the dust, and finally, to be of those who believe in God and bid each other be persevering and bid each other be merciful,—these are the blessed."¶

On the other hand, the following is conveyed to a heartless worshipper : "Woe to those who pray, . . . and refuse help to the needy !"***

* *c.g.*, Safwan and Ikramah.

† *c.g.*, Ibn-Sufyan and Hhakim.

‡ Koran vi. 69.

§ xxxviii. 28.

|| liii. 31.

¶ xc. 8-17.

*** cvii 4-7.

Work, and work alone, is the true test of a believer in the sight of God :

"Surely all who say, Our Lord is God, and then keep straight—there is no fear for them, neither shall they grieve ; —these are the fellows of paradise to dwell therein for ever, a reward for what they have done."*

"Verily whether it be of those who believe, or those who are Jews or Christians or Sabæans, whoso believe in God and the hereafter and do good—they have their reward with their Lord,—there is no fear for them, neither shall they grieve."†

Faithful Work.

Addressing a larger humanity, Mohammed thus appealed to them to sink their petty differences : "To every one of you has God given a rule and an open way—and had He pleased, He would have made you one people, but He will certainly try you in what He has given you respectively. Strive then to excel each other in good works ; to God is your return altogether, and then He will tell you that concerning which ye now disagree."‡

Earnest Work.

The life of the believer, according to Islam, is a severe trial : "Do men imagine that they will be left alone to say, We believe, and not be tried ?"§ "Verily God has bought of those who believe their persons and their wealth."||

The ideal believer is thus described : He "calls men to God and does good himself, and then says, Verily I am a Moslem."¶

The Duty of Man.

And what is the duty of man in Islam ?—

"Verily," says the Koran, "God commands you justice and the doing of good, and the giving to kindred their due, and He forbids you wickedness and iniquity and oppression."**

"Assist one another in justice and piety, but assist not one another in injustice, and malice, and fear to do wrong ; verily God is severe in punishing."††

* xlv. 12 ; xli. 30-2. † ii. 59 ; v. 72. ‡ v. 53. § xxix.
ix. 112. ¶ xli. 38. ** xvi. 92. †† v. 4.

His Free Agency.

The free agency of man is throughout maintained : "When they commit a filthy action, they say, We found our fathers at it," and God makes us do it. Say thou, God bids you not to commit filthy actions. Will ye say of God what ye do not know."*

"Say thou, My Lord forbids abomination, both open and secret, and also iniquity and unjust violence, and to join with God what He has sent you down no power for, and to speak of God unknowingly."†

"Verily God will not change the grace which is in men until they change it for themselves."‡

Some Social Questions.

Having spoken something of the general tenour of the reforms effected by Islam in the domain of creeds, sects, and nations, of beliefs many and practices varied, I next come to take a very cursory view of some of the social reforms effected by Islam which might give some idea as to the real attitude of Islam with regard to Reforms in respect of Society. The time at my disposal will scarcely allow me to enter into a lengthy discussion on this subject with special reference to the then existing society which Mohammed addressed. I will therefore begin with the subject of Woman, her position, etc., from the Islamic standpoint.

Respect of Woman.

"Respect women," is one of the first lessons of Islam. The Koran says : "O men, fear your Lord who made you from one soul, and made from it its mate, and multiplied from them two many men and women. And fear God in whose name ye beg of one another, and respect women. Verily God watches over you." §

Her Position.

Mohammed called woman, "the most inestimable thing in the world," "the handiwork of God," "the mother of men."

She is by no means any inferior in her social life. "Men are but agents of women," says the Koran. ||

Her married life is one of the pleasantest in Islam. "Your wives are a garment to you and ye are a garment to them."* "They would do to men as they would be done by, according to what is reasonable."† "Women also have a portion of what their parents and kindred leave : . . . a determined portion is theirs."‡ "Men have a portion of what they earn, and the women also a portion of what they earn." §

Marriage.

Marriage, according to the Mohammedan law, is not simply a civil contract, not a social partnership merely, neither an alliance for convenience to be dissolved at pleasure. It is an institution of God, whose foundations are laid and principles fixed and enduring as the human race itself. It is a sacred, "strict bond of union," || with the object "that ye may have comfort among yourselves and love and compassion between you." ¶

Some of Mohammed's sayings with regard to Marriage might be quoted with advantage : "Matrimonial alliances between families and people increase love more than anything else." "When people marry they perfect half their religion." "Marry those whom you will love and who will love you." "When any of you marry let them meet each other first." "No marriage can take place without the express will of the woman." "If she consent not, she cannot be married."

Woman's Share in it.

Perfect liberty is allowed to a woman who has reached the age of puberty, to marry or refuse to marry a particular man, independent of her guardian, who has no power to dispose of her in marriage without her consent or against her will ; while the objection is reserved for the girl married by her guardian during her infancy to ratify or dissolve the contract immediately on reaching her majority.

Among the conditions which are requisite for the validity of a contract of marriage are understanding, puberty, and freedom, in the contracting parties. A person who is an infant in the eye of the law is disqualified from entering into any legal transaction, and is consequently incompetent to contract a marriage. A marriage contracted by a minor who has not arrived at the age of discretion, or who does not

* ii. 183. † ii. 228. ‡ iv. 8. § iv. 36. || iv. 25. ¶ xxx. 20.

possess understanding, or who cannot comprehend the consequences of the act, is a mere nullity.

In Islam, the capacity of a woman, adult and sane, to contract herself in marriage is absolute ; she requires no guardian, though to supplement a presumed incapacity of the woman, to understand the nature of the contract, to settle the terms and other matters of a similar import, and to guard the girl from being victimised by an unscrupulous adventurer, or from marrying a person morally or socially unfitted for her, a guardian is generally recommended, such as a mother, an elder sister, or a male member of the family competent enough to act as such. In law, the woman is mistress of her own actions. She is not only entitled to consult her own interests in matrimony, but can appoint whomsoever she chooses to represent her and protect her legitimate interests. Under the law, the guardian acts as an attorney on behalf of the woman deriving all his powers from her and acting solely for her benefit.*

Some More Questions.

While on this subject, I may be allowed to notice its teachings on Polygamy, Concubinage, Divorce, and the system of Female Seclusion.

I may briefly mention that none of these is included in Islam.

Islam, wherever it found difficulty in the matter of existing society which it could ill afford to ignore, quietly laid down rules, so that when the time was ripe for it, they might from within work out its abolition.

Polygamy.

On Polygamy, the Koran says :

“Ye may marry of such women as seem proper for you by twos and threes and fours : but if ye fear ye cannot act equitably and justly, (and surely it is not in your power to act equitably and justly towards women although ye fain would do it,† and God has not given a man two hearts within him,‡) then one only, or what ye have already got under your hands,—that is the chief thing—that ye act not unjustly.” §

* Abridged from Justice Syed Ameer Ali's 'Personal Law of the Mahomedans,' *in loco*. † Koran iv. 128. ‡ xxxiii. 2. § iv. 2.

Concubinage.

Concubinage is distinctly prohibited throughout the Koran.*

Divorce.

Divorce has been strongly denounced by Mohammed, as "the most displeasing of men's actions in the sight of God." The Koran frequently refers such matters to arbitration for reconciliation,† and thus exhorts them to re-unite : "And if ye hate them, it may be ye hate a thing wherein God has placed much good for you."‡

In the Mohammedan law, the wife also is entitled to demand a separation on the ground of ill-usage, want of proper maintenance, and various other causes, but unless she showed very good reasons for demanding the separation, she lost her dowry, as when the divorce originated with the husband (except in case of infidelity) he had to give up to her everything he settled upon her in marriage.

The Zenana System.

Throughout the Koran we have no trace of the Zenana system, by which a woman is entirely withdrawn from the society of men and the freer atmosphere outside her own world of four walls.

Decorum.

Of course, modesty is a virtue upon which Mohammed laid the greatest emphasis without respect of sex : "Speak to the men who believe, that they cast down their looks, and guard themselves from immodesty ; that is better for them, surely God knows what they do. And speak to the women who believe, that they cast down their looks and guard themselves from immodesty, and make not a display of their ornaments, unless what necessarily appears thereof, and let them draw their kerchiefs over their bosoms, . . . and let them not beat with their feet."§ . . .

"O apostle, speak to thy wives and to thy daughters and to the wives of those who believe, that they let their wrappers fall low ; that is better for them, and so shall they be known and not affronted." ||

* xxiv. 32 ; iv. 29, 30 ; v. 7. † iv. 39, 127-9. ‡ iv. 23. § xxiv. 30, 31.

|| xxxiii. 59.

Slavery.

Regarding Slavery, I can here only state that Mohammed looked upon the system as altogether inhuman. He said : "nothing pleased God more than the freeing of slaves."†

He enacted a law that slaves should be allowed to purchase their liberty by the wages of their service, and that in case the unfortunate beings had no present means of gain and wanted to earn in some other employment enough for that purpose, they should be allowed to leave their masters on simply making an agreement to that effect.‡ He also provided that sums should be advanced to the slaves from public treasury to purchase their liberty. §

The whole tenour of Mohammed's teachings made this trade in human lives impossible. I could talk upon it a little longer, but should pass on to the Respect for Life taught in Islam.

Regard for Life.

Wanton destruction of life is considered reprehensible : "There is not a beast upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its wings, but is a people like to you, . . . to their Lord they shall return." ||

Mohammed taught that men would be specially judged at the Day of Judgment with regard to their character to their dumb and humble servitors.

Regarding the human life the Koran teaches : "Whoso kills a being unless it be for another being or for violence in the land, it is as though he killed men altogether, but whoso saves one it is as though he saved men altogether."¶

Just Warfare.

The principle of War is also inculcated in Islam, but it is not, as is generally supposed, directed against all non-Moslems because they are non-Moslems, but it is a struggle for principle and in self-defence. Speaking on the subject the Koran says :

"What ! will ye not fight against a people . . . who begin the fight themselves ?** . . . And what ails you that ye do not fight in the cause of God and for the weak among

† Cf. xc. 13 ; ii 172 ; etc. ‡ xxiv. 33. § ix. 60. || vi. 38. ¶ v. 35. ** ix. 13.

men, women, and children, who say, O Lord, bring us forth from this city of oppressive people, and grant us from before Thee a defender ?" *

"Permission is given to those who fight for that they have been unjustly persecuted." †

A Rule.

The following is the rule of an Islamic warfare : "Fight in the cause of God against those who fight against you, but transgress not ; verily, God loves not the transgressors. . . . But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against the transgressors." ‡

The Interpretation.

Lest the above might be misconstrued, I quote the following :

"As to those who have not fought against you on account of your religion, nor turned you out of your houses, God does not forbid you to act kindly and justly towards them ; surely, God loves the just. He only forbids you to make patrons of those who have fought against you on account of your religion and have turned you out of your houses or have assisted in your expulsion,—and whoso makes patrons of them, surely these are the unjust." §

Religious Toleration.

Above all, the greatest religious toleration has been inculcated by the Prophet of Islam :

"Say thou, O ye who disbelieve, I do not worship what ye worship, nor do ye worship what I worship, neither will I worship what ye worship, neither will ye worship what I worship—ye have your religion and I have my religion."||

"Abuse not those whom they call on beside God, for then they may abuse God openly in their ignorance." ¶

"There is no compulsion in religion ; the right way is in itself distinguished from the wrong." **

* iv. 77. † xxii. 40, 41. ‡ ii. 186-9. § lx. 8, 9. || cix. ¶ vi. 108. ** ii. 258.

Further Remarks.

In these few words, I believe, I have given expression to some of the chief characteristics of the Islam of Mohammed, and will now leave it to this learned gathering to form for themselves any opinion about a religion that at present counts among its followers in India alone 70 million souls.

I find I have to add a few words more to say that there is no eternal law as regards human actions, that the Divine ordinances which regulate the conduct of men are results of growth and development, and that the whole world is in a process of evolution. Mohammed's commands and aphorisms therefore which have been called forth by the passing exigencies of the day or related to the circumstances and requirements of a primitive and archaic society, will have to be differentiated from what is permanent and general (such as I have only noticed here) and what was temporary. "Ye are in an age," said Mohammed, "in which if ye abandon one-tenth of what is now ordered ye will be ruined. After this, a time will come when he who will observe one-tenth of what is now ordered will be saved."

Conclusion.

In conclusion, let me impress upon you most strongly that the Islam of Mohammed is a religion of truth and love as well as any of its sister-religions, all of whom it includes in its own name, and whose prophets and preachers it alike reveres and accepts. In fact, by its expansiveness and its charitable views about all moral creeds Islam deserves a place in the heart of every lover of humanity. May the all-loving Creator of us all lead us into the right way, the way of those He has been gracious to, with whom He has not been angry, and who went not astray—is the daily prayer of 300 millions of devout Moslem hearts which ascends to Heaven. God grant that under the inspiring influence of a world-dominating power we realise the Brotherhood so strongly inculcated by the Prophet of Arabia !

ISLAM (2nd. Paper.)**Its Teachings.**

BY S. KHUDA BUX Esq.

I.

We meet here to-day for a noble purpose ; namely, for the purpose of explaining, understanding and appreciating the diverse religions which claim and command the allegiance of humanity. The true significance of this gathering cannot be misconceived or misunderstood. It is indeed, one of the many features of the new phase of thought which is dawning upon our countrymen. It is but the outcome of the spirit of compromise and the due appreciation of the sense of necessity, now deeply felt and keenly realised, of unity and fraternity, without which India would never be anything but a geographical expression and a body-politic without life and vitality. This meeting, therefore, forms a part, an intergral part, of the great movement calling for social reform and religious toleration on the one hand and pressing for intellectual advancement on the other—a movement which, for the last five and twenty years, has stirred India to its depths.

II.

I am not called upon to-day to explain the importance and significance of Islam among the religious systems of the World nor am I to ascertain and fix the exact position of Mohamed as a religious teacher among the World's great teachers of religions. My task is simpler and yet not altogether free from bewildering perplexities. I have to explain to you what Islam is and what its teachings are : Islam, as preached and delivered by the Prophet of Arabia and stripped of the accretions of ages of theological disputes and controversies ; in other words I am to present to you, to the best of my light, Islam of the prophet Mohamed. Difficult though this task is, it is not indeed a hopeless venture for one who has kept himself clear and free from narrow sectarianism.

To fully appreciate the message of Mohamed it is essential that I should say something about the condition of Arabia before Islam. I must readily admit that so far as pagan Arabia is concerned our information is shadowy,

fitful, and fragmentary ; and the industry of European Scholars, such as Caussin De Perceval, Krehl, Wellhausen, Robertson Smith and Sir Charles Lyall, has succeeded but in lifting the veil merely at its fringe. But however partial and unsatisfactory the account is, we can yet form some idea of the life that the pagan Arabs led and the thoughts that swayed and animated their conduct and their deeds. I will therefore describe "The Pre-Islamic Arabia" as briefly as I can.

The Pre-Islamic Arabs were not a nation. Of the sense of nationality, indeed, they had not the vaguest conception though they were linked by commonness of speech. Arabia was a sum-total of loose and disconnected congeries of tribes ; and the tribe was the source and the limit of social and political obligation. Beyond the tribe there lay no duty and no obligation. Political relations were moral ; for morality was confined within the limits of the tribe. Political organisation was represented by the corporate feeling which found expression in the exercise of the duties of brotherhood. Within the pale of the tribe obtained the practices of prohibition against killing, against adultery and against stealing &c., &c. Beyond it there was no such prohibition. Fidelity to one's kinsman was an imperative duty apart from any question of the justness of the cause.* Outside the tribe there was nothing but constant plunder and unceasing warfare. "Certain large groups were, indeed, almost continually at war with one another. Ma 'add, the people of Hijaz and Al-yamamah generally looked upon Al-yaman as their natural prey and were constantly raiding on the herds of their southern neighbours. Between Tamim and Bakr, the son of Wail, there was permanent bad blood. Ghatafan and Hawazin had a standing feud. In the north, the Kingdom of Al-Hirah, the representative of Persian predominance was the hereditary enemy of Chassan, the representative of the might of Rome." (Lyall, *Ancient Arabian Poetry* p. xxiii). Arabia before Islam was a theatre of internecine warfare restrained but partially by the introduction of bloodmoney. There was compensation for everything for which vengeance could be wreaked. All crimes were assessed as economic damages. Every loss of honor, of property, or of life could be appraised by agreement ; all having their price in camels. We thus see that the Arabs before Islam had

scarcely emerged from barbaric conditions.* There was no social order ; nor any organised government either. The law of sheer brute force prevailed untempered and unrestrained by any civilizing or controlling influence. Nor did they attain any refined idea of religion. Their religion was nothing more or less than gross fetichism, the worship of tree and stone, the veneration of certain personified divine attributes, meaningless ritual and ceremonials. The true religious spirit they never succeeded in grasping and the fear of God never exercised any real and practical influence over their conduct and actions. It was reserved for Islam to instill in them the sense of responsibility to God and to make this idea of human responsibility the guiding and controlling principle of life. To all appearance the Arabs honored the Gods, went on pilgrimage to their sanctuaries, made sacrifices in the temples, anointed with the blood of their victims, Gods carved out of stone or made of wood, consulted the oracles when in difficulty, and questioned them about the future. But all this was sham and counterfeit. Of real and genuine religious feeling there was none. This empty show, however, was kept up for purposes of gain ; the many sanctuaries yielding large incomes to certain noble families and clans.†

In a soil apparently so uncongenial, how did Islam strike its root ? This is an interesting and fascinating question and we must try to solve it here. The solution of this question is to be found in the existence of Judaism and Christianity on the one hand and the commercial activity of the Arabs on the other. By commerce the Arabs acquired an extended knowledge of foreign nations and their civilisation. Frequent contact with the outer world widened their intellectual horizon and awakened in them higher and more spiritual thoughts. They learnt new ideas, acquired new habits, and what was most valuable of all, they learnt to think for themselves. But not merely did travel in foreign countries and intercourse with foreign people exercise a disruptive influence on their heathen ideas but there were forces, alike subversive and destructive, near at home. In Arabia itself the two streams of Christianity and of Judaism flowed, side by side, with Arab Heathenism.

* I have avoided further details here as I have dealt with this subject at length in my contributions to the History of Islamic civilisation pp 146-169.

† Deutech, Literary Remains p. 87. For further information see Von Kremer's Culturgeschichte Streifzuge (my translation p. 49.)

That Christianity had made a considerable advance among the Arabs, is clear from the fact, that at the time of Mohamed it was considerably diffused not merely among the Rabia tribes but even among the Tamim. Nor was the Taivy altogether free from its influence. Its growth, however, was not so favourable in Hijaz and central Arabia but even there, Christian ideas undoubtedly made their way through commerce and social intercourse. Similarly the Jewish influence was equally powerful. When the Jews came to Arabia, we do not definitely know ; but Dr. Nöldeke points out that a great Jewish immigration into Arabia cannot be fixed prior to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and Hadrian. At all events it is clear that at the time of Mohamed there was a large colony of the Jews at Taima, Khaibar, Yathrib, Fedak and Yaman. They did not live scattered among the Arab population, but kept together and though despised by the Arabs, they were yet indispensable to them as merchants, jewellers and goldsmiths. It would, therefore, be idle to suppose that they exerted no spiritual influence over the Arabs.* That this is no unfounded theory or improbable supposition is evidenced by the fact that in the works of four of the most prominent Arabian poets of the Pre-Islamic time—An-Nabigah, Zuhair, Al-Asha and Labid—we find expressions which show that they at least, if not the wild wanderers of the desert, knew very well what a spiritual religion meant.† Ibn Qutaibah enumerates drinking, joy, wrath and love among the “motive causes” which speed the poet ; but we cannot fail to detect in their poems an under-current of deep religious feeling. Individual minds felt a sense of uneasiness and sought to find some plausible solution of the mysteries of life and death and traces of such a frame of mind we notice frequently in ancient Arabian poetry. On no other basis, indeed, can we explain the lamentations of the royal poet Imra-ul-Qais over the worthlessness of the life of pleasure that he led and the conversion to Christianity of Qais-B. Zuhair, the leader of the Abs in the long fratricidal war against the Dhubians.‡ In considering the rise of Islam we cannot be unwatchful of the course of contemporary thought or unmindful of the religious forces which assisted in its success. Such, indeed were the forces at work in Arabia before Mohamed ; forces which could not have failed

*Wellhausen, *Reste* pp. 230-231. † Lyall, *Ancient Arabian poetry* p. 93.

‡ In Wellhausen's *Reste* p. 229 will be found the passage in question from Imra-ul Qais.

to stir higher thoughts in enlightened minds and to create a reaction against Arab Heathenism. And a reaction, indeed, did set in. A band of distinguished men, whom we must recognise as the heralds and standard-bearers of Islam, no longer willing to tolerate idolatrous practices, definitely cut themselves adrift from the Arabian paganism. They called themselves Hanifs ; a word of doubtful meaning and the cause of much controversy. "The most acceptable conjecture seems to me," says Sir Charles Lyall, "to be, that of Sprenger, that it is connected with the Hebrew *Hanef* (heretic)." Hanitism had certain specific features *viz.*, rejection of idolatry, abstention from certain kinds of food, and the worship of "the God of Abraham." Ascetic practices, such as the wearing of sackcloth are also ascribed to some of the Hanifs.* Islamic tradition has handed down to us the names of a number of religious thinkers before Mohamed who are described as Hanifs and of whom the following is a list :—

1. Warakah b. Naufal of Kuraish.
2. Ubaidulla b. Jahsh.
3. Uthman b. Al Huwarith.
4. Zaid b. 'Amr b. Naufal.

Ibu Kutaibah adds to the above :—

5. Urbab b. al Bara' of Abdul Qais.
6. Umayyah b. Abi-s-Salt.
7. Kuss b. Saidah of Iyad (Aghani XIV, 41-44.)
Mohamed heard him at Ukadh but he died before the mission.
8. Abu Kais Simrah b. Abi Anas.
9. Khalid b. Sinan b. Ghaith of Abs.

To these Sir Charles Lyall adds :—

10. Abu Kais Saifi ibn Al-Aslat of the Aus-allah of Yathrib.

It is impossible to misconceive the importance and significance of Hanifism in the origin of Islam. The path was already prepared for it and Islam offered to the Arabs what they were long in search for : a moral, ethical, and spiritual teaching ; a higher form of worship and the last but not the least, fraternity and union. The tribal cults were

*The Journal of The Asiatic Society, Oct. 1903 p. 773. Khuda Buksh, Islamic civilisation p. 147 and the authorities therein cited.

henceforward merged in a higher form of worship and the nobler energies of the Arab race obtained a religious consecration.

Islam became the starting point for the Arabs, for conquests alike spiritual and temporal. With Islam became the prerogative of the Arab race to be "an ensign to the nations," to bear and to carry the banner of the true God to the remotest corners of the earth. Hence the unceasing campaigns and the far-extending conquests.

III.

It is clear beyond doubt that Christian and Jewish influences, to a large extent, unsettled and disturbed the beliefs of the Pagan Arabs and paved the way for the prophet. Resistance to the spread of his faith there was, but it was mainly from those, who sought to maintain the old faith and superstition, not on account of any warmth of conviction or sincerity of zeal but on account of the fear and apprehension that the success of Islam would mean loss of large incomes derived from the temples and old heathen practices. But resistance founded upon such a selfish basis, could not and indeed did not prevent the onward progress of Islam. In the deadly conflict between Islam and Arab Heathenism, Islam ultimately triumphed.

We proceed first to enquire as to what was the basis or in other words what were the sources from which Islam was derived. Islam freely borrowed from Judaism and Christianity and even did not hesitate to adopt practices prevailing in Pre-Islamic Arabia. In fashioning his religion the prophet adopted an eclectic method, retaining or rejecting from the older systems whatever seemed to him necessary and proper. It is not exactly within the scope of my paper to precisely specify or to accurately define the exact obligation of Islam to Christianity or Judaism. Such a discussion would take me far afield. Professor Wellhausen is inclined to belittle the influence of Judaism in the birth and infancy of Islam and points to the Islamic conception of Jesus as the greatest of the prophets before Mahomed, as a conclusive proof of his contention. But the present writer is not prepared to attach much weight to this argument. If the Islamic conception of Jesus, indeed, is to be put forward as indicating the absence of Judaic influence on early Islam, with equal force might the Islamic conception of Jesus be urged as subversive of the theory of Christian influence so

stoutly advocated by Professor Wellhausen. The basis of dogmatic Christianity, namely, the Sonship of Christ, Mohamed inveighed against, early and late. It would be idle to deny the indebtedness of Islam to Judaism. Mohamed has not merely accepted dogmas and doctrines of Judaism, minute Talmudical ordinances, but has even adopted, in their entirety, some of the Jewish practices and far above all these, that which, indeed, constitutes the very foundation of Islam, namely, the conception of a severe and uncompromising monotheism. The fact is that both Judaism and Christianity were used and used freely by the prophet in building up his religion. Nor is this a new theory. The prophet never put himself forward as introducing something new but he invariably claimed for himself the honour of reviving the old and the true beliefs which had fallen into neglect and oblivion. But besides the Jewish and Christian sources, not a small portion of Islamic ritual and ceremonials were mere reproductions of Pre-Islamic practices. The entire ceremonies relating to the pilgrimage (Hajj) and the sacred service at the temple of Mecca have survived in Islam with little or no variation from the days of Arab Heathenism ; the only change that Mohamed effected in them was to allow the pilgrims to put on a particular kind of pilgrim-dress consisting of two pieces of cloth, of which one covers the hip and the other the breast and shoulders, while the head had to be kept uncovered, as in ancient days, when they used to make up their hair into a sort of wig by means of some glutinous substance. And so indeed it has remained, to this day, the prescribed pilgrim's costume. After visiting the Kabah they used, in heathen days, to visit the two rocky hills of Safa and Merwah, on which were placed two bronze idols. Mohamed went so far in his toleration of the heathen pilgrimage customs that he allowed the visit to Safa and Merwah to continue as before but had the two idols removed. Of the history of the origin of the forms of the prayer, prostration, ablution, and fasts, our knowledge is vague, uncertain and shadowy.

"Islam has," says Von Kremer, "largely drawn upon Judaism, Christianity, the religion of Zoroaster and possibly even upon Manichæism. From Parsi-ism it has taken both directly and indirectly. A number of obviously Parsi ideas have penetrated into Islam through the channel of Jewish books, notably the Talmud. The doctrine of the Resurrection, most of the legends relating to heaven and hell, and the entire system of Demonology have found their way into the Qur'an

through Judaism. So indeed, did the description of the trial and the tortures of the dead in the grave by two angels *Munkar* and *Nakir*. The idea of the bridge *Sirat*, as thin as a hair, which leads to Paradise across the abyss of Hell is certainly derived from the Parsis, having passed over into the Qur'an through the Midrash. But Islam has not hesitated to borrow directly from Parsi-ism. It is a significant fact that the word *Din*, which so repeatedly occurs in the Qur'an, has been borrowed from the Parsi books. In the Huzveresh it appears in exactly the same form (old Backtrian Dæna).*

It is not suggested that the prophet had access to the written books of either the Jews or the Christians; though in some passages of the Qur'an we can trace direct resemblances to the text of the old Testament and the Mishna. † His knowledge of the Jewish and Christian books, at times faulty and imperfect to a degree, was derived almost exclusively by oral communications.

I trust I have said enough to illustrate the condition of Arabia before Islam and the sources from which the prophet of Arabia acquired his religious inspiration. I, now, go on to explain Islam and its tenets.

IV.

Mr. Ameer Ali explains Islam as "Striving after righteousness" but Prof. Hirschfeld, in his luminous "Researches into the composition and exegesis of the Qur'an", very correctly points out that Ameer Ali's definition only reflects the theoretical and moral side of the question—limited to the initial stage of Islam (3),

The term Islam, as time went on, included the whole of the theoretical and practical constitution of the faith and as such it is interpreted by Al-Ghazzali in his *Ihya-ul-ulum* (P. 104 Vol. 1.) "Islam," says he, "is an expression for submission and unquestioning obedience, abandonment of insubordination, defiance and opposition." And it is in this light indeed that the prophet himself regarded Islam. The Bedwins say : (XLIX. 14) "we, believe." Tell them 'you

*Von Kremer, *Culturgeschichtliche Streifzüge* (my translation p. 47)
 † Comp. Qur'an XXI, 105 with Ps. XXXVII 29 ; 1. 5 with Ps. XXVII. The New Testament. Comp. VII, 48 with Luke XVI. 24 XLVI. 19 with Luke XVI. 25. Then again verse 35 corresponds almost word for word with Mishna *Sanh* IV. 5 ; also 11.183 with Mishna Ber. 1:2. Noldeke, *Sketches from Eastern History* p. 31. (3) Life and Teachings of Mohamed p. 226 (2) Prof. Hirschfeld, p. 14.

shall not "believe" (only) but say that you practice Islam' (Aslamna). In Surah III. 17 (Cf. V. 79) Islam is identified with Din (Cf. LXI. 7-9) and the relation between the two synonyms, says Prof. Hirschfeld, is broadly discussed by Al-Shahrastani (Milal pp. 25 to 27) and is stated to embrace the five duties viz :—of testifying to the unity of God and the Divine inspiration of Mohamed, the duties of reciting prayers, of giving alms, of fasting in the month of *Ramdhan*, of going on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The fundamental basis of Islam is the unity of God—stern, unbending monotheism; and this doctrine of the unity of God is preached in the Qur'an in season and out of season, and ever and anon with augmented emphasis. To associate gods with God is the most unpardonable sin and the prophet's extensive vocabulary of vituperation is never exhausted in attacking those who associate gods with God. In Surah VI (verses 74-79) we have one of the most charming passages testifying to the unity of God: "and remember when Abraham said to his father 'Azar, thou takest those images as God? Verily, I see that thou and thy people are in manifest error."

'And so did we show Abraham the domain of the heavens and of the earth that he might be one of those who are established in knowledge. And when the night overshadowed him he beheld a star "This, said he, is My Lord" but when it set, he cried, I love not gods which set". And when he beheld the moon uprising "This, said he, is my Lord" but when it set, he said, surely, if my Lord guide me not, I shall be of those who go astray.'

'And when he beheld the Sun uprise he said, "This is my Lord," 'this is the greatest' but when it set, he said, "O my people I share not with you the guilt of joining Gods with God."

"I verily turn my face to him who hath created the Heavens and the earth following the right religion and I am not one of those who add gods to God".

Not a whit has Gibbon (1) exaggerated the truth when he wrote that "the creed of Mohamed is free from suspicion or ambiguity and the Qur'an is a glorious testimony to the unity of God. The prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of Idols and men, of stars and planets on the rational principle that whatever is born must die, that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish". And again says the

(1) Gibbon, Bury's Ed Vol V p. 339.

historian of the Roman Empire, "these sublime truths, thus announced in the language of the prophet, are firmly held by his disciples and defined with metaphysical precision by the interpreters of the Qur'an. A Philosophic atheist might subscribe the popular creed of Mohamedans : a creed too sublime perhaps for our present faculties".

The unity of God, therefore, is the central faith of Islam and connected with it, by natural process as it were, is the belief that man is responsible to the Creator for his actions and deeds. This belief, the Pre-Islamic Arabs never knew or conceived, and the prophet Mohamed, by inculcating this belief, not only laid the foundation of a spiritual life among his countrymen but also of a well-organized society, soon destined to grow into a magnificent empire. The sphere of duty and obligation, charity and sympathy, confined hitherto merely to tribesmen was widened and extended and the narrow tribal tie was lost in the more comprehensive brotherhood of faith. At this distance of time, it is perhaps difficult for us to fully realise the influence of this teaching but to it alone must we ascribe the dethronement of those ideals of Arabian Paganism which the author of the *Muhammedanische Studien* has so graphically described, comparing and contrasting them with the higher ideals substituted by Islam (1). The religion of the prophet, like the wand of a magician, completely and utterly changed the life of the Arabs. It hushed their tribal disputes into silence, it destroyed their insularity, it set up a purer and a more refined standard of domestic life, it opened before them fresh *vistas* of spiritual happiness and temporal success.

Next to the Unity of God Islam enjoins the five daily prayers upon its followers. It is curious that the Qur'an lays down no rule as to the manner in which the prayer should be offered. Apparently as Mr. Ameer Ali (2) points out, the practice of the prophet has associated certain rites and ceremonies to the due observance of prayers. In the Mohamedan prayer we observe the Jewish practice of standing erect, the Christian practice of prostration and a third of inclination (3). Originally the prophet instituted three daily prayers (4). Their extension to five was an innovation of the late Meccan period and the details of the purity legislation appear to have

(1) Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*. Vol I. The chapter *Murawwa and Din* ; Nicholson, *Literary History of the Arabs* pp. 177-179 ; Browne *Literary History of Persia* pp. 189 at Seq. (2) *Life and Teachings of Mohamed* p. 263 (3) Margoliouth, *Life of Mohamed* p. 102 (4) Ibn Sad, Vol. IV. Part I.

been still later. Yet the theory, says Prof. Margoliouth, that God should be approached only by persons in a state of purity, was known in South Arabia before Mohamed's time, whence, it is probable, that his earliest converts were instructed therein." Prayers are to be performed five times in the course of every day : between daybreak and sunrise, between noon and the "Asr" (which latter period is about midway between noon and night-fall) between the "Asr" and sunset, between sunset and the "Asha" (or the period when the darkness of night commences) and at, or after the Asha.* It is considered more meritorious to take part in the public *Salat* of the community conducted by a leader (Imam) than to discharge the Salat by oneself. Von Kremer has rightly emphasised the importance of the Muslim prayer by recognizing the mosque as the drill-ground for the war-like believers of early Islam. In stern discipline, in unconditional obedience, says the author of the *Culturgeschichte des Orients*, lay the greatest achievement of Mohamed and the real secret of the strength of Islam.† The five daily prayers, where the leader (the Imam) stood before the community, closely arrayed behind him, and where every movement of his, was imitated with military preciseness, by the hundreds of the faithful, assembled in the mosque, served, among the muslims, in those times, the purpose of what is now known as the drill-ground : a school where people learnt to assemble, to move in a body and to follow the leader.

In the Qur'an ‡ the command to pay the poor-tax (*zakat*) directly follows the command to pray : "Perform the prayers and pay the poor-tax." This tax had a strong communistic complexion which is evidenced by the following tradition that the prophet sent Ma'dh to the Yaman and told him : "Summon them to accept the confession of the faith namely, that there is no God but Allah and that I am his prophet ; if they listen to it, teach them further, that god has ordained the five daily prayers ; if they are also agreeable to this, teach them further that God has enjoined the poor-tax (*sadakah*), payable by the wealthy, on their property, for distribution amongst the poor." § This tax was annually payable upon camels, oxen (bulls and cows) and buffalos, sheep and goats, horses and mules and asses and gold and silver (whether

*In Lane's 'Arabian Society in the middle Ages,' the reader will find a detailed account of the religious institutions of Islam pp. 1-24.

† Vol. 1. p. 10. ‡ Surah. 2. 40. § Von Kremer, Vol 1. p. 50.

in money or ornaments etc.), provided the property was of a certain amount ; such as five camels, thirty oxen, forty sheep, five horses, two hundred Dirhams or twenty Dinars* The proportion is generally one-fortieth, which is to be paid in kind or in money or other equivalent.

The third most important obligation enjoined by Islam is fasting in the month of *Ramadhan*. The Muslim must abstain from eating and drinking and from every indulgence of the senses, every day during the month of *Ramadhan*, from the first appearance of day-break until sunset, unless physically incapacitated. The last but not the least is the pilgrimage to Mecca and Mount Arafat, which the Muslim must perform at least once in his life,

These then, namely, the unity of God, the belief in the Divine mission of the prophet, the five daily prayers, fasting in the month of *Ramadhan* and the pilgrimage, are the essentials of Islam. The one supreme mission of the prophet was to create and to maintain an absolute brotherhood in faith. All Muslims were declared equal, irrespective of birth, rank or profession, and the world has never, perhaps, seen a more perfect democracy than the one called into being by the prophet. "Truly, the most worthy of honour in the sight of God," says the *Qur'an*, "is he who feareth Him most ; for the faithful are brethren ; whereupon make peace amongst your brethren." A similar refrain runs through the parting sermon of the prophet, "O men God has taken away from you the arrogance and pride of ancestry of heathen days. An Arab has no excellence or superiority over a barbarian, other than that which is secured to him by his fear of God and his righteousness. Ye are all the progeny of Adam, and Adam himself is of the Earth."

No caste and no priestcraft does Islam recognize. Every Muslim is his own priest and every spot of land is his *mosque* to pray and to worship *Allah*. For no other purpose than to keep alive the sense of corporate unity of the Muslims, did the prophet declare the superiority of the public prayer over prayer by oneself and establish the institution of the pilgrimage.

Year after year, from all parts of the Islamic world, streamed to Mecca, Muslims in thousands and tens of thousands, to worship *Allah* at the *Ka'bah* and to perform the *Haji*. There, at Mecca, year after year, Muslims of diverse nationalities recognised and realised the potent spell

of their faith and felt more deeply and keenly than ever, the tie which bound them together. Moreover, as Von Kremer points out, there did the Muslims obtain an opportunity of listening to the lectures of far-famed professors and men of letters, who attracted, year by year, an ever-increasing audience. There indeed, did Islam shine forth in its full lustre; attracting and alluring, enthraling and captivating its followers, as it could do no-where else. Every spot, associated with some historical incident; every place, connected with some important event or other of the life of the teacher, awakened the love and fired the enthusiasm of Muslims, for the son of Abdullah, the maker of Arabia and the founder of Islam.

In his fascinating book (The Life and Teachings of Mohamed) Mr. Ameer Ali has admirably summed up the Islamic teachings: Nothing can be simpler or more in accord with the advance of the human intellect than the teachings of the Arabian prophet. The few rules for religious ceremonials which he prescribed were chiefly with the object of maintaining discipline and uniformity so necessary in certain stages of society, but they were by no means of an inflexible character. He allowed them to be broken in cases of illness or other causes. "God wishes to make things easy for you," says the Qur'an "for man was created weak". The legal principles which he enunciated were either delivered as answers to questions put to him as the chief Magistrate of Medina, or to remove or correct patent evils. The prophet's Islam recognized no ritual likely to distract the mind from the thought of the one God, no law to keep enchained the conscience of advancing humanity." Nothing was more distant from the prophet's thought than to fetter the mind or to lay down fixed, immutable, unchanging laws for his followers. The Qur'an is a book of guidance to the faithful and not, to be sure, an obstacle in the path of their social, moral, legal and intellectual progress. The requirements of Islam are at once easy and simple and leave scope for the Muslims to perform their duties as subjects or citizens, to attend to their religious obligations without sacrificing their worldly prosperity and to adopt, whatever is good, in any community or civilisation, without any interference on the part of their religion.

IV.

Before I conclude this paper I shall, here, make a few general observations on the religion of the prophet of Arabia.

Whatever Islam may have become through pharisaic artificiality and theological subtlety, its leading principles are as broad as the starriest heavens and as enduring as the everlasting hills. It contains, in common with other great religions, those eternal truths which are only too liable to be forgotten in blind zeal, in warmth of controversy, in sectarian narrow-mindedness, in religious fanaticism but which our education and culture teach us to discover and appreciate wherever we find them. The governing principle of all religions is the same. In the language of the apostle James ; "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." This is the burden of all religions and this, the burden of Islam.

The kernel and doctrine of Islam, Goethe has found in the second *Surah* which begins as follows :—"This is the Book. There is no doubt in the same. A guidance to the righteous, who believe in the Unseen, who observe the prayer and who give alms of that which has been vouchsafed unto them, and who believe in that which has been sent down unto thee—the Revelation, which had been sent down to those before thee—and who believe in the life to come. They walk in the guidance of their Lord, and they are the blessed. As for those who believe not—it is indifferent to them whether thou exhortest them or not. They will not believe. Allah hath sealed their hearts and their ears and over their eyes there is darkness and theirs will be a great punishment." "And in this wise" Goethe continues, "we have *Surah* after *Surah*. Belief and unbelief are divided into higher and lower. Heaven and hell await the believers or deniers. Detailed injunctions of things allowed and forbidden, legendary stories of Jewish and Christian religion, amplifications of all kinds, boundless tautologies and repetitions, form the body of this sacred volume, which, to us, as often as we approach it, is repellant anew, next attracts us ever anew, and fills us with admiration, and finally forces us into veneration."

This passage, indeed, is as good a summary as any other but there is one, and in this same chapter, still more explicit, illustrating the catholicity of the prophet's mind and his discerning judgment. "When Mohamed," says Deutsch,* "told his adherents at Medina no longer to turn in prayer towards

*Literary Remains p. 128.

Jerusalem but towards the Ka'bah at Mecca, to which their fathers had turned, and when he was blamed for this innovation he replied:—That is not righteousness : whether ye turn your faces towards the east or the west, God's is the east as well as the west. But verily righteousness is his, who believes in God, in the day of Judgment, in the angels, in the Book and in the prophets ; who bestows his wealth for God's sake, upon his kindred, and orphans, the poor and the homeless, and all those who ask, and also upon delivering the captives ; he who is steadfast in prayer, who giveth alms, who stands firmly by his covenants, when he has once entered into them ; and who is patient in adversity, in hardship and in times of trial. These are the righteous, and these are the God-fearing." What a noble idea of life and religion do we find here. It is not merely in the recitation of prayers that righteousness consists but in solemnly acting up to the teachings of the religion which we profess ; in showing regard for the poor and the orphan, the forlorn and suffering humanity in general ; in relieving the miseries of the captives, in fulfilling the promises made, in enduring with calm fortitude, the trials and reverses of fortune. Here, in this passage, we have the key to Islam, nay, I would go further and say to all religions. It is only the clouded vision which sees difference between one religion and another ; to one who has the eyes to see and the heart to feel, all religions appear but as reflections of one and the same light.

"Mosque or temple which is thy refuge ? O homeless one what home hast thou ? By increasing the number of windows the sun is not multiplied. O short sighted one, what is Ka'bah, what are temples ?"

This was the spirit of the prophet's religion which he preached in the Qur'an in every accent of pleading and warning, of pathos and hope, of repentance and forgiveness. He stood firm by his faith unshaken by threats and persuasions. His success, indeed marks the ascent of the soul, of the higher and nobler nature of man from darkness to light. Nor was it a different light to that which had appeared to humanity "at sundry times and in diverse manners." His preachings fell on the Arabs, still in the spring-tide of their national life, and laid a tremendous hold upon their mind and their imagination ; changing and transforming them and giving them as it were, a new life. It taught them firmness of resolve, contempt of death, singleness of purpose and unity and fraternity and it gave them that intensity of religious fervour which became the most valued asset of

their national life. "Above all," says Dr. Noldeke, "Islam gave and gives, to those who profess it, a feeling of confidence such as is imported by hardly any other faith.* And, indeed, it was this, again, which made them great warriors and conquerors of the world."†

Islam possesses an inherent force and vitality which nothing can weaken or destroy. It carries within it germs of progress and development and has great powers of adaptability to changing circumstances. There is nothing in its teaching which conflicts with or militates against modern civilisation, and the moment Muslims realise this truth their future will be assured and their greatness will only be a question of time. Modern Islam, with its hierarchy of priesthood, gross fanaticism appalling ignorance and superstitious practices, is, indeed, a discredit to the Islam of the prophet Mohamed. Instead of unity we have Islam torn into factions ; instead of culture we have indifference to learning ; instead of liberal-minded toleration we have gross bigotry. But this intellectual darkness must necessarily be followed by intellectual dawn and we trust, that it is now not far distant or too long to come.

An impartial consideration of the life of the prophet and his teachings cannot fail to awaken the warmest admiration for the man and his mission. Whatever may be the defects in the Qur'an, even non-Muslims must concede, that it is a noble testimony to the unity of God and whatever may be the blemishes in the life of the prophet, none, but a perverse mind will regard him as anything but sincere in his conviction, honest in his purpose and unshaken in his resolve. Mohamedan civilisation was the outcome of the Mohamedan faith and nothing but Islam alone can again give to the Mohamedans what they have lost : their civilisation, their culture, and their empire.

ISLAM (3rd Paper)

As Interpreted.

BY THE AHMADIYYA SECT.

Attitude towards the other Religions.

I may at the outset briefly point out the attitude of Islam as interpreted by the Ahmadiyya movement towards the other great religions of the world. The fundamental principle of

*Sketches from Eastern History p. 27. † Von Kremer Vol. I. p. 92.

Islam with regard to Divine revelation is, that as God is the God of the whole world and not of any one sect or one tribe, He has also blessed all parts of the world and all tribes of the human race with the greatest of His gifts, *i. e.*, Divine revelation, which is the fountain-head of true guidance, and He has not been sparing in the granting of this gift to any people. And thus it ought to have been. For, we see that the things on which the physical life of man depends, are found in all countries and among all people though they are meant only for man's short lived course of life upon this earth. How can it therefore, be supposed that those guidances and Heavenly blessings, on which depends the spiritual life of man, which is his life eternal, should be granted to one particular tribe in one particular country and all other tribes and people should be kept entirely ignorant of them. Human reason cannot attribute such injustice to God, who is the God of all people, as to favour one people and not all others as if He were a tribal deity. God has not made any invidious distinction between different peoples and He is not unjust to any. The powers and faculties which He granted to the ancient people of India were also granted to the Arabs, the Persians, the Syrians, the Chinese the Japanese, the Europeans, the Americans and the Egyptians. For all alike, the earth of God serves as a floor, and for the sake of all, the sun, the moon and the stars perform such functions as God has charged them with. All people alike derive benefit from the air, the water, the fire, the earth and the other things created by God and all equally use the produce of the earth, its corns and its herbs, its flowers and its fruits.

The holy Quran opens with a verse which teaches this high, noble and universal doctrine. It says. "All perfect and pure attributes belong to God, who is the Lord of all the worlds." The words used here are so general that they include all the different peoples, different ages and different countries. The opening of the holy Quran with a verse which is so broad in its significance clearly shows that the holy Quran refutes the doctrine which sets limits to the vast and unlimited grace and sustenance of God, reserving the manifestation of these attributes for a single people to the exclusion of all others as if the latter were not the creation of God. The holy Quran is full of verses which clearly contradict the belief that prophets have risen from one particular tribe or been sent to one particular country. It teaches by the introduction of many and varied comparisons that as Almighty God

has been providing the physical necessities of every country according to its conditions and circumstances, so He has also provided means for its spiritual training and the fulfilment of its spiritual wants. It says in one place in the clearest words that "there is no people among whom a warner has not been sent."

In fact, it will be admitted without any discussion that the true and perfect God in whom we must all believe is the Lord of the whole world. His sustenance is not limited to a particular tribe or a particular age or a particular country, but He is the Sustainer of all people, the Lord of all ages, the King of all places and countries, the Fountain-head of all grace, the Source of all power, physical and spiritual, the Nourisher of all that is created and the Supporter of all that exists. The grace of God encompasses the whole world and encircles all peoples of all ages. He extends His bounty to all and does not exclude any people from the all-comprehensive circle of His grace, nor does He deprive any age of His great blessings. The holy Quran makes it obligatory upon its followers to accept all the prophets who are accepted by large numbers of the human race. It is a sufficient argument of their truth that they are accepted as true, by a great part of the world and that the assistance and support of God was granted them at every step. On this principle we do admit, and to make a public declaration of this admission we consider it to be our happy duty, that Moses and Jesus and the other prophets were all holy, chosen and righteous prophets of God, and that the holy men through whom, guidance was brought to the people in the Aryavarta, and other righteous leaders of the Hindus, such as Rama and Krishna, were all the chosen servants of God to whom He sent down His grace and upon whom He showered His blessings. This message of peace and union, we consider our peculiar privilege to preach to the world, so that all the different peoples may become as one people by revering the holy religious leaders of each other. It was on these principles that the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement wrote his last work entitled. "The message of peace" for bringing about a union between the Hindus and the Muhammadans.

Nature of the Movement. The Ahmadiyya movement stands in the same relation to Islam as Christianity stood to Judaism. By Christianity, here is meant, not Christianity as it is preached or practised now, but the Christianity which Islam represents to be the true religion, taught by Jesus Christ. The chief characteristic which distinguished

Christianity from all other sects of Judaism was its acceptance of Jesus as the expected Messiah of the Hebrews in which all the hopes and prophecies of Israel were fulfilled, and the chief characteristic which distinguishes the Ahmadiyya Movement from all other sects of Islam is its acceptance of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the movement, as the Promised Messiah and the Mahdi of the Muslims, in whom all the hopes and prophecies of Islam concerning its future triumph and greatness are fulfilled. But there is an important difference here. As the Mosaic law was meant only for the Israelites, the mission of Jesus was also originally limited to the Hebrew people only, and he was essentially the Messiah of the Israelites and not of any other people or nation. But the mission of Islam, unlike that of Judaism, is universal, and the mission of the Ahmadiyya movement, unlike that of Christianity, is similarly universal. This universality of its mission is indicated in the claims of its founder to have come in fulfilment of the hopes and prophecies, not of the Muslims only, but of every people who entertain such hopes and expect a reformer in the last ages. Thus Ahmad claims to be the Promised Mahdi and Messiah of the Muslims, and the Promised Messiah of the Christians and the Promised *Avatar* of the Hindus. These three claims point to the universality of the Ahmadiyya Mission.

History. The history of the movement is not a very long one. It was established in 1889. Up to that time the founder of the movement was looked upon by a great majority of the Indian Muslims as a great Muslim reformer, and his claim to be a recipient of Divine revelation, which became widely known through his first great work, the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, the first volume of which appeared in 1880, was generally admitted. There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet which says that in the beginning of every century of the Muslim era, God will raise one, who will reform the faith. In accordance with this prophecy, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement announced as early as 1880, that he was the reformer who had to appear in the beginning of the 14th. Century of Hejira and the Muslim public generally accepted him as such. His famous work, *the Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, was hailed by the Muslims as the best work that was ever written on Islam during the thirteen hundred years that had elapsed since its birth, a view to which Maulvi Mohamad Hosain of Batala, now one of his bitterest enemies, gave candid expression, in his *Ishaat-us-*

Sunnat. But though his claims were thus admitted, the new movement did not come into existence till 1889 when the founder of the movement published a manifesto, stating that he was commanded by God to accept *Baiât* from the people and to take them into his discipleship. This announcement which was made on the 1st. Equal December 1888, drew many to him, and excited very little or no opposition. But the course of the movement was not destined to run smoothly, beyond the short period of two years. In 1891, Ahmad declared that the Muslims were in error in believing Jesus Christ to be alive, that he was dead and that the Almighty God had raised him (Ahmad) in the spirit and power of Jesus Christ, in accordance with the promise contained in the prophecies about the advent of the Messiah in the last ages. The claim was not altogether a new one, for he had already published, in the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, revelations in which he was addressed as Christ and also that he saw a vision to the purport that he and Jesus were two parts of one and the same Essence. The announcement nevertheless, excited great opposition and changed the feeling of friendship and reverence in which he had been held up to that time, into one of bitter animosity and strong ill-will, and *fatwas* were published in which the founder and the members of the sect were all declared to be heretics.

Significance of the name. The reasons which led the founder of the Ahmadiyya Sect to give this name to it were explained by him in a manifesto issued in 1900, when this name was adopted. The Holy Quran and the traditions speak of two manifestations of the Holy Prophet and it is to these two manifestations that his two names Muhammad and Ahmad refer. Muhammad means "the glorified one" and the name was therefore significant of the great glory which the Holy Prophet was destined to attain, and the significance of the prophetic name came to light during the Medinite period of the Holy Prophet's life and the thirteen hundred years that have since elapsed, as is shown by the great glory and political power which Islam attained during these two periods. The other name Ahmad means "one who glorifies." Just as Muhammad is significant of glory, Ahmad is significant of peace. It indicates spiritual greatness attained by one who glorifies the name of God. In the Holy Prophet's life the manifestation of this name was witnessed during the Meccan period of his life, and in the history of Islam, the Ahmadiyya Movement represents this particular phase of the greatness of Islam. In other

words, the appearance of Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, is really the second manifestation of the Holy Prophet, the chief characteristic of which is to be the predominance of the quality indicated in his second name Ahmad, which is peace.

Conditions of Initiation. The conditions on which disciples are initiated into the Ahmadiyya society were first published on the 12th January 1889. The following is a brief summary of them :—

1. That the disciple shall promise with a sincere heart that he shall not be guilty of any kind of *shirk* so long as he lives.

2 That he shall eschew all evil, such as falsehood, fornication, transgression of Divine Commandments, cruelty to any creature of God, rebellion against Government etc., and that he shall not allow himself to be led away by his passions.

3. That he shall be regular in saying out the five daily prayers and shall also try to say out the night-prayer (tahajjud), and that he shall invoke Divine blessings upon the Holy Prophet, ask forgiveness of his sins from God and seek His protection and remembering the numerous Divine blessings upon him, glorify and praise the name of God under all circumstances.

4. That he shall not in any way injure mankind in general and the Muslims in particular by his hand or tongue or otherwise.

5. That he shall remain faithful to God under all circumstances, whether happy or grieved, in affluence or in need, and that he shall submit to the will of God in all cases, and be prepared to suffer any hardship or disgrace while on the path to Him, and that he shall not under any trial, turn his face away from Him, but shall make the tie of union closer.

6. That he shall not follow his sensual desires and shall submit to the Holy Quran and take the words and deeds of the Holy Prophet as the rule of his life.

7. That he shall entirely forsake self-conceit and haughtiness and lead his life in submission, humility and meekness.

8. That he shall consider the interest of his religion and its glory and sympathy with Islam as dearer than all other interests, viz., his property, his children and his honour and every thing that is dear to him.

9, That he shall sympathise with all the creatures of God for His sake, and so far as it is in his power, benefit mankind in any way he can.

10. That he shall remain faithful to the promise which he makes at the time of *Baiat* so long as he lives, and that the tie which unites him to his Master, shall be more powerful than all worldly relations and kinships and other ordinary relations of master and servant.

Chief Object. The chief object which the Ahmadiyya Movement sets before itself is the regeneration of mankind through renewal and re-animation of faith in God and pointing out the true way to liberation from the bondage of sin. How this object is attained by joining the sect is thus explained. A belief in God is simply a lip-belief if there is no certainty in the mind as to the truth of what is professed with the tongue. The existence of God, though it may be inferred from Nature, is *known only* through revelation and through the wonderful manifestations of Divine power and knowledge—which are shown through the prophets and messengers of God. It is for this reason that the Almighty God has been sending His messengers from time to time, so that those who witness the manifestations of Divine power, may have a firm faith in God, which may transform, their lives. Hence the Almighty God has sent a messenger, the Promised Messenger of the last ages. He is come to re-animate faith and to generate true belief in the heart with regard to His existence, by extraordinary signs which make one directly witness the wonderful manifestations of Divine power and knowledge. Unless such a living faith is generated in the heart, a man can never be released from the bondage of sin and can never attain to true union with God. Without true belief in the heart, a man can never overcome sins, and without fresh Heavenly signs showing wonderful Divine power and knowledge, there can be no faith, and without a prophet of God to whom the deep secrets of the future are made known, there can be no fresh Heavenly signs. It is such a prophet of God that the Ahmadiyya Sect has found in its leader, and it is for this reason that most of the members of this movement are daily making progress towards purity and righteousness and towards attaining 'union with God'. Thus the movement claims to be the only religious revival in the world, in this age, in the true sense of the term.

Cardinal doctrine. The principal thing which brings the Ahmadiyya sect face to face with the cherished ideas of

two of the most important religious communities of the world *i.e.*, Muhammadans and Christians, is that Jesus did not die on the Cross but that he died a natural death afterwards, his tomb being situated in the Khan Yar Street at Srinagar. The evidence in support of these two assertions is drawn from several sources, briefly given below :—

I. Evidence from the Gospels. (1) Jesus prophetically likens his own fate to that of Jonah, (Matt. 12 : 39, 40 ; Luke 11 : 29, 30). But according to the Bible story, Jonah did not really die, though he could not have been taken but for a dead man. Jesus, therefore, prophesied that he would remain alive like Jonah. (2) Jesus said that he had been sent to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt : 15 : 24), and that he had come "*to seek and save that which was lost*" (Luke 19 : 10). It is certain that the Jews at Palestine did not represent more than two tribes of Israel and the other ten tribes had long before settled in the East. These were, therefore, properly the *lost* sheep and they were to be *sought and saved*. It was, therefore, to these tribes that Jesus betook himself after the crisis of crucifixion. (3) The dream of Pilate's wife (Matt : 27 : 19) was meant to save the life of Jesus. Why should the angel have appeared to the Magistrate's wife pleading for the safety of Jesus, if it had not been God's will that he should be saved. (4) The prayer of Jesus the night before his arrest, affords another very strong evidence of his being taken down alive from the cross, for the prayer of a righteous man in distress and affliction is never rejected by God. In fact, the Almighty God had promised to save him from the disgraceful death on the Cross, and Jesus was referring to this promise when he cried "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." (Matt : 27 : 46). Heb. (5 : 7) makes the matter still more clear, for there the acceptance of this prayer of Jesus is admitted in clear words : "when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him, *That was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.*" In fact, no clearer evidence than this is needed to show that Jesus did not die on the Cross. (5) Jesus remained on the Cross for a few hours only, but death by crucifixion was always tardy. The two men crucified along with Jesus were still alive when taken down from the cross, and therefore Jesus could not have died so soon. (6) The breaking of legs which was resorted to, in the case of the other two criminals was dispensed with in the case of Jesus. (7) The side of Jesus being pierced, blood rushed

out, and this was a sure sign of life. (8) Even Pilate did not believe that Jesus could die so soon (Mark 15 : 44). (9) Jesus was not buried like the other culprits, but was taken charge of by a wealthy disciple of His, who took every care of him and put him in a spacious room, hewn in the side of a rock. (10) When the tomb was seen on the third day, the stone was found to have been removed from its place, which would not have been the case if there had been a supernatural rising. (11) Mary, when she saw him, took him for the gardener (John, 20 : 15), which shows that Jesus had disguised himself as a gardener. Such disguise would not have been needed if Jesus had risen from the dead. (12) It was in the same body of flesh that the disciples saw Jesus, and the wounds were still deep enough for a man to thrust his hand in, and he still felt hungry and ate, as his disciples ate (Luke 24 : 39—43). (13) Jesus undertook a journey to Galilee with two of his disciples walking side by side with him. It shows clearly that he was fleeing, as an ordinary man would have fled from the country where he was persecuted to some place of safety. If his object had been to rise to Heaven, he would not have undertaken a journey to Galilee. (14) In all the post-crucifixion appearances Jesus is found to be concealing and hiding himself as if he feared being discovered. A 'risen Jesus' would have made a public appearance and should not have shown any fear of being discovered by the persecuting Jews.

II. Another source from which the Ahmadiyya sect draws on argument, in support of its assertion is the ointment which is known under the name of the "Ointment of Jesus." This ointment is said to have been prepared for Jesus by his apostle. It is spoken of highly by medical authorities as being extraordinarily efficacious in healing wounds. Since there is no evidence that Jesus ever received any wounds besides those which he received on the cross, the conclusion arrived at is clearly this, that the ointment was prepared by the apostles for the wounds of their master which he received on the Cross.

III. The discovery of the tomb at Srinagar is looked upon by the Ahmadiyya sect as the third source of evidence showing that Jesus did not die on the cross. Several circumstances are mentioned as supporting this conclusion.

(1) Oral testimony, based on tradition, of the people of Kashmir tells us that the tomb belongs to one who bore

the name of Yus Asaf, who was known as a *Nabi* (prophet) and as a *Shahzada* (Prince), who came to Cashmere from some country in the West, some 1900 years ago. The tomb is also known as that of *Nabi Sahib*.

(2) The *Tarikh-i-Azami*, a historical work written some two hundred years ago, says, referring to this tomb, on page 82 : "The tomb is generally known as that of a prophet. He was a prince who came to Cashmere from a foreign land. He was perfect in his piety, righteousness and devotion. He was made a prophet by God and was engaged in preaching to the people of Cashmere. His name was Yus Asaf."

(3) The *Ikmal-ud-Din*, an Arabic work, a thousand years old, says : "He, (Yus Asaf) wandered about in several lands and towns until he reached a land and lived and stayed therein, till death overtook him."

(4) Joseph Jacobs also states on the authority of an old version of the story of Yus Asaf that he (Josaph) at last reached Cashmere and there died (Barlaam and Josaphat, P. C. V.).

(5) There are many circumstances which identify Yus Asaf with Jesus. (a) There is conclusive testimony that he was a foreigner and not a resident of Cashmere or India. (b) He is universally known as a *Nabi* or prophet among the Muslims, and therefore he cannot be a Muslim saint ; for no Muslim saint has been called a *Nabi* after the Holy Prophet. The word *Nabi* occurs only in two languages, viz., Arabic and Hebrew, and no Indian saint could be called a *Nabi*. But the only *Nabi* in Arabia was the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and therefore Yus Asaf can only be a Hebrew Prophet. (c) The time which tradition and history ascribe to Yus Asaf is the time of the Prophet Jesus. (d) The name *Yus* is clearly the same as *Yasu*, the Hebrew original of the word Jesus. (e) It is even stated that Yus Asaf was an Israelite fugitive who came from Syria. It is easy to see that such a fugitive could be none but Jesus, for the time of the two is the same. Moreover the life of no other Israelite prophet is attended with the mysterious circumstances with which the life of Jesus is attended. (f) Besides being called a *Nabi*, Yus Asaf is called a *Shahzada* or a prince, and this also identifies him with Jesus. (g) The teachings of Yus Asaf have a striking resemblance with those of Jesus. Some of the parables in the two are quite identical. (h) Still more striking is the circumstance that the prophet Yus Asaf gives the name Bushra (Hebrew and

Arabic for Gospel) to what he preached, as in the following passage from the Ikmal-ud-Din: "Then he began to compare the tree to Bushra (Gospel) which he preached to the people, and he likened the spring of water to wisdom and knowledge which he possessed, and the birds he compared to the people that swarmed round him and accepted his religion." The identity in parables and names of the books preached by Jesus and Yus Asaf clearly shows that Yus Asaf was no other than Jesus. (i) The book of Yus Asaf was translated into almost all the European languages, and the Christian world had always held him in great honour. Even a church was raised in honour of his name in Sicily. (j) Christian writers have tried to identify Yus Asaf with Buddha, asserting that the word is a corruption of Bodhisatva which was first changed into Josaphat and then into Yus Asaf. But the mere possibility of the corruption of one word into an entirely different word is no proof. Besides this, the remains of Yus Asaf lie at Srinagar while those of Buddha have been discovered elsewhere, which conclusively shows that Buddha and Yus Asaf are two entirely different persons.

(IV) The Fourth Source of Evidence. The Messiah promised to the Israelites, was the Messiah of all the Israelite tribes, ten of which had settled in the East in Afghanistan and Cashmere. Therefore it was necessary that Jesus should have gone to them. The following evidence is cited in support of the assertion that these two people, the Afghans and the Kashmiris represent the ten lost tribes of the Israelites. (1) The Afghans unanimously claim to be of Israelite descent. Their prejudice against the Jews is so strong that such a claim could never have been made if there had been no truth underneath it. They have also family genealogies through which they trace their descent to Israel. Nor is the claim a new one; it is as old as the race itself. (2) In their physical features the Afghans and the Kashmiris bear no resemblance to their neighbours but their resemblance with the Jews is most striking. (3) In their dress, character and customs there is the same resemblance. (4) Some proper names among the Afghans and the Kashmiris are clearly of Israelite origin, such as the names of certain tribes of Afghans and the names of certain places in Cashmere. (5) The names of certain towns in Afghanistan and Cashmere are the very names which their cities etc. bore in their ancient home. For instance, the modern names Kabul, Punach, Zaida, Himis,

Gilgit, Laddakh, Leh, Suro, Suket, may be compared with Cabul, Phœnicia, Zidon or Sidon, Hams, Galgotha, Ladah, Lehi, Shur and Succoth of Ancient Syria. (6) Eminent writers and travellers have borne testimony to the same effect.

Second Advent. The doctrine of the second advent of Christ as preached by the Ahmadiyya sect may be considered from two different points of view, firstly in its relation to Christianity and secondly in its relation to Islam. In its relation to Christianity, the doctrine is interpreted in the same light as the doctrine of the advent of Elijah was interpreted by Jesus Christ. The distinguishing sign of the appearance of the true Messiah, according to the Jewish Scriptures, was the second advent of Elijah before that of the Messiah. Accordingly when Jesus claimed to be the Promised Messiah of the Israelites, they questioned him about the prophecy relating to the advent of Elijah. The interpretation given by Jesus was that John the Baptist was the Elijah who was to come (Matt : XI : 14) because he came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke I : 17). It is exactly in accordance with the interpretation given by Jesus that the Ahmadiyya sect interprets the doctrine of the second advent of Christ, and looks upon the advent of its leader "in the spirit and power of Christ" as the second advent of Christ.

In its relation to Islam, the doctrine of the Promised Messiahship is interpreted by the Ahmadiyya Sect in the following manner. The Almighty God vouchsafed the foundation of the Israelite law to Moses, the great law-giver of Israel and brought the Mosaic dispensation to a close by sending a Messiah. Thus Moses was the first and Christ the last prophet of the Mosaic dispensation. The Almighty God had moreover promised to Moses that another prophet "like unto" him would be raised from among his brethren (Dent : XVII : 18). He also said to the Holy Prophet Muhammad that he was the Promised Prophet who was the like of Moses (Alquran (LXXIII : 15). Again He promised that He would raise successors to the founder of Islam "like unto" the successors that had been raised to Moses. (Alquran XXIV : 54). In accordance with this promise it was necessary that the last successor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, should be the like of the last successor of Moses, *i.e.*, a Messiah should appear among the Muslims like the Messiah that had appeared among the Jews. The leader of the Ahmadiyya Sect claims that he is the Messiah

Promised to the Muslims and the following points of resemblance are mentioned. (1) The Jews expected a Messiah who should be a temporal ruler and delivering them from foreign yoke establish a Jewish kingdom throughout the world. The Muslims also expect a Messiah who would wage war against the non-Muslims and slay all of them, and establish a Muslim empire in the whole world, (2) As quite against the expectations and cherished hopes of the Jews, the Messiah that appeared among them was a man of peace, in like manner the Messiah that has appeared among the Muslims has come to preach his message of peace and to establish the superiority of Islam, not by the sword, but by arguments and Heavenly signs. (3) At the appearance of the Jewish Messiah, the Jews were divided into various contending sects, so are the Muslims, at the appearance of the Muslim Messiah. (4) In the country where the Israelite Messiah appeared, the Israelites were the subject people. Similarly Muslim dominion has ceased to exist in the country in which the Muslim Messiah has made his appearance. (5) The English rule under which the Muslim Messiah has appeared bears a striking resemblance to the Roman rule under which the Israelite Messiah made his appearance. (6) As the Jews had fallen off from true purity and righteousness at the advent of their Messiah, similar is the case now with the Muslims. (7) The Jews were punished with a severe scourge of plague, on the persecution of their Messiah; the people of this country have also been punished with a terrible plague on account of their rejection of the Promised Messiah. (8) As the Jews sought to have their Messiah tried at law and put to death, the opponents of the Muslim Messiah also sought to have him put to death by involving him a criminal case.

The Teachings of Islam as interpreted by the Ahmadiyya Sect. I. The Ahmadiyya sect holds that Islam is a living religion, by which it means that in Islam, the door to Divine revelation is always open and that a true Muslim begins to lead a heavenly life in this very world. Three arguments are given. (1) Various verses of the Holy Quran are quoted, *i.e.*, in the *Fatiha* which is the most important prayer taught to Muslims, they are commanded by the Almighty God to pray: "O Lord, show us the right path, the path of those upon whom thou hast bestowed thy blessings." This prayer would not have been taught if the Almighty God had not meant to bestow these blessings, the highest of which all, is Divine revelation, upon the Muslims. Traditions are also cited, for

instance, there is a tradition which says, "Verily God will raise for the Muslims at the commencement of every century a man who shall re-animate their faith." (2) Reason also requires that if Divine revelation was granted in the past, it should also be granted now or in the future. All the religions teach that the Almighty God watches the doings of His creatures and that He listens to their prayers. They also hold that He spoke at some time, for instance, according to the Hindus, in the beginning of this cycle ; according to the Jews, to the prophets of Israel ; according to the Christians, at the time of the apostles of Jesus ; according to the Muslims, at the time of the Holy Prophet. If, therefore, He still continues to see and hear, as all these religions maintain, it is quite unreasonable to assert that He has ceased to speak. The fact is, that as He spoke to His chosen ones before, He speaks even now, but only to His chosen ones, and His Word is distinguished from ordinary words by the wonderful prophecies which it announces and the deep secrets of the future which it reveals. (3) The presence in Islam of a recipient of Divine revelation, such as the founder of the Ahmadiyya Sect is, shows conclusively that Islam is a living religion.

II. The Ahmadiyya Sect denies the principle that religion may be propagated by means of the sword and does not expect a Mahdi or a Messiah, who will slay all non-Muslims who refuse to accept Islam. This sect denies the advent of any such Mahdi or Messiah, and holds all traditions, about such advent to be untrustworthy, while it takes Ahmad of Qadian to be the true Mahdi and Messiah, who had come to establish the supremacy of Islam by Heavenly signs and arguments.

III. It holds that the Holy Prophet is the seal of Prophets and no other prophet can appear after him except one who is spiritually his disciple and who receives the gift of prophecy through Him. It is only a true Muslim who walks in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet and who can become a prophet. It is in this sense that this sect considers its founder to be a prophet.

IV. The Ahmadiyya Sect denies that Divine attributes are possessed by others. For instance the Almighty God creates life, but no human being can do it. Hence it denies that Jesus could make birds and breathe life into them, which is one of the miracles attributed to Jesus by the orthodox Muslims. The verse of the Holy Qur'an from which this conclusion is drawn is interpreted by the

Ahmadiyya Sect in a different manner. Similarly, the orthodox Muslims hold that the Dajjal (Anti-Christ) would come with the powers of the Divine Being, *i.e.*, he would be able to give life to the dead, to send down or withhold rain, etc, but the Ahmadiyya Sect rejects the ideas as false and interprets the Anti-Christ doctrine differently.

V. In the relative value which is generally attached to the Holy Qur'an and the traditions of the Holy Prophet, the Ahmadiyya sect differs from the orthodox. The latter generally attach more value to traditions than to the Holy Qur'an, and make its verses subject to what is said in the traditions. But the Ahmadiyya Sect makes the Holy Qur'an a judge of the traditions, and rejects every tradition as false and fabricated which may be opposed to the Holy Qur'an.

Moral Teachings. In his teachings, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement laid the greatest stress upon purity of heart, true righteousness, and forgiveness. The following quotations from the Noah's Ark will show what spirit he desired to breathe amongst his followers:—"Do good so as to love it well and forsake evil so as to hate it bitterly. Know it for certain that no deed rises up to God which is devoid of true righteousness. Righteousness is the root of all goodness; if the root has not dried, the deed shall prosper." "He who forsakes not, lying and deceit, is not of my followers. He who is involved in the greedy "love of this world" and does not even raise his eyes to look to the next, is not of my followers." "He who forsakes not the company of the wicked, who cast their evil influence over him, is not of my followers." "He who does not revere his parents, or does not obey them in that which is fair and not against the Holy Qur'an, or does not care to serve them to his utmost, is not of my followers. He who is not kind and gentle towards his wife and her relatives, is not of my followers. He who refuses his neighbour the least good in his power, is not of my followers. He who forgives not the trespasses of others and harbours revenge, is not of my followers. The husband who is false to his wife or the wife that is false to her husband, is not of my followers."

Life after Death. The founder of the Ahmadiyya Sect has given philosophical explanations of many of the Islamic doctrines but the limits of such a brief paper will not allow more than a reference to only a few of them. The state of

man in the after-life is not, according to this teacher, who bases all his arguments on the Holy Qur'an, a new state but is a representation, a full and clear image, of our spiritual state in the present life. Here the good or bad conditions of the beliefs or deeds of a man are latent within him and their poison or panacea casts its influence upon him only secretly but in the life to come they shall become manifest and clear as daylight. After our earthly course is ended we are translated to regions where our deeds and their consequences assume a shape and what is hidden to us in this world is there unfolded and laid open before us. The bliss or burden which a person feels in the performance of an act vanishes away but it leaves its good or bad impression upon the heart. Thus a book is being prepared in this very life, hidden from the human eye which records every action and this book shall show itself clearly in the next.

Heaven and Hell. It is thus here that a man begins to lead a heavenly or hellish life, but he is so engrossed in the affairs of this world that he does not often feel its effect and in the next life, he will see it manifestly. The blessings of Heaven are only images of the spiritual effect of the good deeds done here and the torments of hell the images of the spiritual effect of evil deeds. The water of life which the righteous man drinks spiritually in this world shall there appear manifestly as a river. The spiritual wine of the love of God with which he remains in a blissful state in this world shall assume the shape of a river flowing with wine; and the honey of the sweetneess of the faith which he spiritually tastes here shall flow in Paradise in palpable rivers. And as there will be no physical obstacles there, the spiritual state shall grow stronger and man shall continue to attain to higher and higher states of perfection. Similarly the fire of hell is only a clear image of the heart-burnings of this life, and the spiritual tortures of this life assume a physical shape in the next. The desires of this life which keep a man with his head bent upon this earth assume the shape of a chain put about the neck and heart-burning of this life is clearly seen as the flame of a burning fire. The hell of the passions and the inextinguishable desires of this world is the visible hell of the next life. But the torments of that hell are remedial and this state does not last for ever, for man has been made to attain to endless perfection.

Angels and Devils. We find in the physical world as an established law, that we stand in need of external agents, notwithstanding the faculties and powers within us. The eye sees things but it stands in need of external light. The

ear receives the sound but independently of the agency of air it cannot serve that purpose. Man, therefore, essentially stands in need of something beside what is within him, and as in the physical so also in the spiritual world. The existence of the physical intermediaries between man and the outside world is a clear indication of the existence of intermediaries in the spiritual world. It is these intermediaries that we term angels and devils. Just as our physical faculties are not by themselves sufficient to enable us to attain any object in the physical world without the assistance of other agents, so our own spiritual powers cannot by themselves lead us to do good or evil deeds, but here too external intermediaries which have an existence independent of our internal spiritual powers, are necessary to enable us to do good or evil deeds. The inviter to good is the angel and the inviter to evil, the devil. As there are two attractions placed in man, the attraction to good and the attraction to evil, there are the two classes of beings, the angels and the devils, corresponding to these two attractions. If we respond to the attraction for good we are following the holy spirit and if we respond to the attraction for evil we are following Satan. Hence we are required to believe in angels by which it is meant that we should follow the inviter to good or the attraction for good which is within us. This is the real significance of the belief in angels.

SIKHISM.

BY

BABU JODH SING.

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHER DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

WHE SIKHS cannot boast of many doctrines. Our religion is simple and may be conveniently summed up in four words : unity, equality, faith and love. The first two terms express our ideas about God and man, the last two determine the course of our conduct for the realisation of our highest bliss.

The first figure traced in our Scriptures is the numeral '1'. It precedes *Om* of the old faith, which word in our Scriptures is read as *Oangkar*. There was an attempt to introduce the idea of the Trinity in the old faith. Some European students have gone even so far as to assert that the Hindus do believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. But with us no such attempt is possible. There is but one God. By this '1' two ideas are expressed : that of singleness and that of unity. He is *one* without an equal. He is also a unit. He is not the sum total of so many forces bundled together, but He is *one* that makes the existence and the manifestation of all other forces possible.

If you want to name Him, call Him "*Matty*" *i.e.* One who is, who was and who shall be. He is the creator, and pervades His creation. We have no idea of God, as sitting somewhere in the Heavens and watching us from above, but in Him we live and move and have our being. But it should not be understood, that we identify God with the creation. Without Him creation is impossible, but He is possible without the creation. The creation is the manifestation of individuality. When this is destroyed, the phenomenon as a separate existence ceases to exist, but God is still there. Existence remains, though His individuality is destroyed.

He is without fear ; He is without enmity. There is not one God for the Hindus, and another for the Mohammedans, but there is one God, the Lord of the whole creation. He loves all and does not care for the artificial boundaries of caste,

colour or creed set up by man. He is never sorry for His doings, neither does He hate nor indulge in curses.

He is not limited by time, but, still He is an existing Reality. He has no birth, is self-existent and is attainable through the grace of the Guru.

What I have said above is a free translation of the first verse of our Scriptures embodying, as it were, in a nut-shell the basic principles of Sikhism. This will give an idea of the Supreme Being, in whom we believe. Words cannot express Him, but still this is the only vehicle that is known to us, to convey our ideas to others. I shall give some further quotations to make our conception of Godhead a little clearer.

"He cannot be set up, nor is He made by any one. He is self-existent and pure." The use of the words "Set up" might seem somewhat peculiar and their meaning is a little obscure. But this alludes to "Asthapan Ceremonies" performed by some people. When the image of a certain God or Goddess has been carved out of stone or moulded into shape out of a certain metal, it is then set up in a sacred place for worship. Before "setting up" it is regarded as common clay or metal and it is only after certain prescribed ceremonies have been gone through, that the image is thought to be invested with Divine attributes. The Guru says, my God cannot be "set up".

"He is but one, unaffected. He has no death, no birth, and no caste. He is unfathomable, unknowable and is without form or feature. On seeking after Him, I saw Him in every form".

But here I may say, that the God of the Sikhs I mean the God, about Whom we read in the Sikh Scriptures is not the mere intellectual abstraction of a philosopher. "He is and we can see Him" says the 4th Guru, in *Srirag-di-War* ;—

"Hear O saints of God, O servants of Him, O brothers, hear the evidence of the True Teacher (Sat Guru). That man, on whose forehead, the ordained portion (grace) is prominent, will give it a place in his heart. I tasted peacefully the nectar of the praises of the Most High and the Most Exalted from the words of the Teacher. Then light shone and darkness disappeared, even as the night is chased away by the sun.

O Gurmukhs, (ye whose will has become attuned with that of God) I saw with my own eyes Him, who is unseen, unfathomable, unknowable and pure".

So, when we say God, we mean an existing reality, and not an abstract idea existing nowhere but in our brains. Our gross senses cannot perceive Him, our mind cannot know Him, the power of our thought cannot fathom Him, but our spirit can commune with Him. And why does not the spirit of every man realise Him? Because the eye of our spirit is much too unsteady to get any clear perception. A hazy notion it may have and indeed it has. For a clear view we are required to be steady in our gaze and then we can see Him whenever we choose. This, gentlemen, is the idea of God that we have.

Theories of the Creation, the Guru does not proceed to explain in detail. It is enough, when we recognise that "By His order all form appeared and by His order all life came into existence". In one verse an attempt has been made to give the outlines of the creation of cosmos, of how from ether water was formed and how from that was shaped the whole universe; but saving such like general hints the Guru does not care to enter into minor details. "How can the child know about the birth of his father" the Guru says in the Sukh Mani. "I simply know that the whole creation is strung in the thread of His order". Adam and Eve, Brahma and Saraswati are all the same to us. We recognise that we are God's creature and that we can see our Creator. "No one knows," says the Guru, "In what manner the world was created and for all practical purposes it is of very little use to indulge in fineness of argument."

To illustrate the purport of his teachings the Guru makes use of any mythology, that is best intelligible to his audience. To a Hindu he talks of Dharm Raj, to a Mohammedan of Israel. We are to die and shall have to suffer for our actions. It is immaterial, whether *Yama* awards the punishment or some Archangel. So, from God we at once come to man. We do not wrangle about the "how" and "why" of the Creation. We are here and we have to find out the way to our salvation. This is the problem, to which nearly the whole of our Scriptures is devoted.

The brotherhood of man is the necessary out-come of the unity of Godhead. "There is but one father and we are the children of that One"; this is the key-note of the teachings of the Guru and the social relationship of the Sikhs with the rest of mankind. "The Creator pervades His creation and the creation has its being in the Lord. Whom to call law, when there is nothing but Him? The Allah first created light. All beings proceed from his Omnipotence. The whole

creation sprang out of the same light. Who are high and who are low? Nobody will ask you about your caste or birth ; seek the Truth that has been revealed unto you. Your caste and rank depend upon your own actions”.

“Let no one be proud of his caste. He, who knows the *Brahma*, is a Brahman. So, do not be proud of your caste. O, ignorant fool ! this pride proves to be the source of many evils.

“ But) the whole Creation germinated out of one *Brahma*. Out of the same clay the whole creation is moulded. The Potter makes them in various ways” and further, “some are Udasis, some Sannyasis, and others Yogis ; some are regarded as Brahmacharis and others as Yatis. Some are Hindus, some Turks, others Rafzis and Imamshafis.” “Recognise all men as of one caste. Karta (the creator, the Hindu appellation) and Karim (the merciful, the Muslim epithet) are one and the same. The selfsame Being is the giver and the forgiver ; misguided by doubt do not believe in a second entity. All are to serve the One and all have the same Lord. Know that there is but one Image and one Spirit.” From these quotations, which could be multiplied several times if time permitted it, you could guess the relationship of man with man, that Sikhism recognises. Nor gentlemen were the Sikh Gurus mere speculative philosophers. The idea of the unity of the Spirit was not a novelty in India. But how many were there who acted up to what they professed? The Gurus practically proved that all men are equal. At the time of baptism (Amrit Sanskara) not only do all the disciples sit on the same floor, and eat and drink out of the same vessel, but actually put morcels into the mouths of one another. There is no caste distinction. The Brahmans, The Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras, nay even the sweepers class, are baptised and taken into the fold of Sikhism. Though of late with the decline of the real spirit, people have begun to make distinctions, they cannot refuse any body admittance into the fold. Happily in this respect a revival is also taking place. Young men, with and without Western education, who have studied the spirit of the Guru and who are longing to realise it, are not only embracing with open arms all the disciples, but have actually married girls from families, lower in caste or rank than theirs, to give a practical proof of their belief in the Guru and the equality of man. And in this connection, I may mention one more point. We do not prescribe different Dharma for different people. Whoever you are, you must serve the Sangat (congregation) with your own hands. You must clean their shoes,

draw water for them, wave the fan and grind the corn. You must submit to this discipline, if you aspire to be a real Sikh. There is no privileged class that is exempted from this general rule. Priest or layman you have to do it and the more you do it, the better Sikh you become.

Sikh baptism is obligatory for women as well as for men. For both, the rules of conduct and the religious duties are identical. They worship in the same temples and the congregations are always mixed, brothers and sisters sitting side by side, singing the praises of the Most High. This is what is taught us, regarding the equality of man.

The ideal of our life is the destruction of egoism and the means to this end are faith and love. By faith we do not mean mere intellectual assent. In order to be a Sikh you must, in the sweet words of the Guru "sell your mind to the Guru". You no longer guide your actions by your own experience. Your own experience is the sum total of impressions made by your selfish actions and hence every act of volition based on your experience, will further ensnare you. You must take as your guide, the teachings of the Guru.

And here, gentlemen, I may explain the qualifications and the functions of the Guru, in whom we have to put our faith. From a study of comparative theology one comes to the conclusion that the necessity of a Guru has been felt from the very out-set in all religions. He appears under different names, as an Incarnation of the Deity, as a Buddha, as a son of God, or as a Prophet ; but no religious system has yet been able to dispense with the necessity of a Guru. Even the latest development of religious thought—I mean the Brahma Samaj, has its Keshab Chander Sen, who is called the Minister. And this is as it ought to be. To deny the existence of a man greater than yourself means to refuse to profit by the experience of others. Confidence in one's own self is a virtue, but carried to excess, it changes into a horrible vice. One may believe with advantages in one's own potentiality ; but to acknowledge no achievements superior to one's own, certainly paves the way for one's fall.

Sikhism, which literally means the "path of discipleship," therefore, lays great stress upon the necessity of having a Guru. But what is the position accorded to him in Sikhism ; what should be his qualifications and functions ? I proceed to explain.

With its lofty ideals about Godhead, Sikhism certainly can not call him "an incarnation of the Deity." "Those

who call me the supreme Lord, will go to hell," says the tenth Guru. In our essence we are Divine; but with the limitations of our individuality, it is certainly wrong to claim equality with the Infinite.

"They are not subject to the law of the transmigration of Soul. The servants of the Lord come to do good to others. They infuse spiritual life, inspire devotion and unite men with the Lord".

"They themselves have been saved and come for the salvation of the world."

"In every age the Lord did send His servants" and the Bard says in our Scriptures "that the Rama of the Treta Yuga and the Krishna of the Dwapar, is the Nanak of the Kaliyuga". Thus we recognise the continuity of the message. In fact we are not to attach much importance to the persons but to the words. For it is said "The Word is the Guru. The Guru is the Word. All nectar is in the Word. If the disciple obeyeth, what the Word sayeth, verily the Guru would save Him."

And so after the ascension of our Gurus, we recognise the "Granth", the repository of their teachings, as our Guru. So long as this *Granth* is safe, we do not feel the necessity for acknowledging any man as our Guru.

But what are the qualifications of those people, who come to reveal the Word ?

"Those beings are called Sat Gurus who have known the Eternal and the All-pervading. By their company the disciples will be saved," Nanak ! "by singing the praises of God."

Of course the first qualification of a teacher ought to be, that he should be a perfect master of the subject, he professes to teach ; so none can be a Guru who has not attained to union with the Supreme Spirit. But his mere saying so will not do. Our Scriptures lay down the landmarks by which his actions are to be judged. All his actions are to be based on charity, love, and unselfishness and because he is a servant, he should speak less of himself and more of his Master. And it is therefore, gentlemen, that the teachings that are full of too many references to self and claims to special privileges and position for self, do not find favour with the Sikhs. "Is this the Guru," a Sikh would ask "Who has lost his individuality? Why then should he glorifies more his own name than that of the Lord whose messenger he claims to be?" Humility, though not servility, ought to be the key-note of his teachings.

Again, what are his functions? We do not believe in the doctrine of apostleship or intercession. Really we do not believe in any salvation attainable after death. We must be saved in this life. And the function of a Guru is that of a loving father who takes us by the hand and steers us clear of all shoals and rocks. Mere intellectual assent to his doctrines or lip-faith in him is of no avail. Faith means trying to do what he did before us. We might fall short of the ideal but if the effort continues the Guru's helping hand is there and he will save us, not on account of his holiness but by that purity which he is sure to impart to our own lives.

Again, gentlemen, the Guru does not claim any essential superiority over his disciples. He says clearly, that in every man there is the potentiality of perfection, and when the disciple has attained to perfection, the Guru hails him as his equal. Says he :—

"He who calls himself a Sikh, should get up early and meditate on the name of God. Let him make the attempt in very early hours of the morning ; wash his body and bathe in the tank of nectar. When the sun is up, let him sing the Words taught by the Guru and continuously let him meditate on the Name of the *Hari*" and "when he acquires this stage," adds the Guru, "the servant Nanak prays for the dust of the feet of such a disciple, who himself remembers the Lord and makes others remember Him."

In the teachings of their respective spiritual guides, preserved by other religions, we seldom come across with such a statement. In Sikhism the Guru is not supposed to preside on the Judgment Day, nor sit on the right-hand, nor intercede on behalf of his followers as is done in other religions. The Guru says :—

"He who lives the right life is my disciple. Nay, he is my master and I am his servant."

The Guru is a beacon-light, that shows us the right path and saves us from dangers. "Come to me," he would say, "and I shall lead you to God, Who would relieve you of your burden." And in this connection, I may mention one incident that will explain the whole thing. When Guru Gobind Singh had baptized the five beloved, he himself then received the baptism from them, thus showing practically that he claimed no essential superiority over his disciples.

We are, therefore, drawn to Guru Nanak not on account of his miracles or extraordinary powers, but because of the sublimity of the ideals preached by him and the charm of his own life.

"Selfishness is the cause of misery", he says, and from the acts of his life we see that he is unselfish. He has attained to the supreme bliss and we see that he is happy. We have no experience of an unselfish life and cannot reasonably say "aye"; but taking his life as the best evidence of his theory we put our faith in him. We begin to live unselfish lives and we get the desired happiness. Our faith in the Guru is strengthened and we go on at a faster pace until the goal is reached and the supreme bliss is realised.

Gentlemen, this is the idea of our salvation. A Sikh does not begin by reforming himself, but begins by losing himself. Lose yourself and the reform would come of itself. The idea of self is to be destroyed, and when you begin by reforming yourself, you strengthen the idea. "Forget yourself," says the Guru, "and then you will be blessed with purity and happiness."

'First accept death (of individuality), nay, leave all hope of life. Become the dust of the feet of all men and then come to me.'

The best means of securing this end is love, which necessarily involves sacrifice. Love God and His creatures. And this can only be done by sacrificing the interests which you regard as your own, for their sake.

"Love God as a lotus loves water. The waves beat against it right and left, but it blossoms with fresh vigour. Love God as a fish loves water. The more water there is, the more pleased is the fish."

"Of all kinds of charities, kindness towards a living being is the most acceptable."

When one begins to sacrifice and to love, he is on the way, and he has reached the goal when his individuality is *non est*.

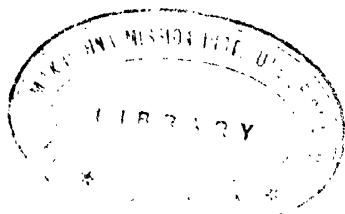
These are the main features of our religion. We believe in the transmigration of soul and the law of Karma. But our Karma is annihilated when we take shelter with the Guru. And this is intelligible enough. Our past Karma has developed our mind to a certain point. Now, when we decide not to guide our actions by our own judgment but by that of the Guru, the sum-total of our past impressions is practi-

cally no more for us. Thus our past sins are forgiven when we become of the Guru.

I cannot say in what we differ from others. Nearly all religions include the principles I have enumerated above ; but they add something more which we leave out. We do not believe in the apostleship of any prophet. There is no Heaven after death in the sense in which most of the Semitic religions explain it. With us the destruction of our individuality is the highest bliss. But it should be borne in mind, that by this we do not mean annihilation. The idea of existence and the idea of individuality are two separate things. With the destruction of individuality, existence does not cease.

These are the cardinal points of our religion. The history of the Sikh religion and the rites and customs of its votaries are in themselves a very interesting study ; but that must be left for some future occasion. For the present, the humble attempt I have made to explain the fundamental principles of Sikhism will, I think, suffice, and thanking you all for giving me a patient hearing I beg leave to finish.

WAIHE GURU JI KA KHALSA
SIRI WAHE GURU JI KI FATEH.



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